DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 253 SO 030 069

TITLE Democracy's Next Generation: A Study of Youth and Teachers.
INSTITUTION People for the American Way, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 188p.
AVAILABLE FROM People for the American Way, 2000 M Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036 ($10.95).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizen Participation; Citizenship Education; Citizenship Responsibility; Community Involvement; Current Events; Democracy; *Democratic Values; Elementary Secondary Education; Futures (of Society); Higher Education; Interviews; *Political Attitudes; Social Attitudes; Social Studies; Social Values; Surveys; Teacher Attitudes; Values; Voting; *Youth

ABSTRACT

Informed and involved citizens are crucial to the functioning of U.S. democracy, yet many people increasingly are reluctant to exercise even the most basic responsibilities of citizenship. Participation in the political process is disturbingly low. If this trend is to be reversed, the country must strengthen civic values and expand the civic participation of the next generation. This study was commissioned to examine youth understanding of and commitment to three important aspects of citizenship in a democracy: meeting personal responsibilities; serving the community; and participating in the nation's political life. The study assessed young people's views on such topics as personal values and aspirations, community service, politics, images of the United States, concepts of citizenship, and influences on their notions of citizenship and civic involvement. Social studies teachers also were interviewed, on the assumption that they shoulder the major responsibility for citizenship education in the schools. There were four major findings of the study. First, young people cherish U.S. freedoms without understanding what it takes to preserve them. Second, this generation is markedly less involved and less interested in public life than previous generations. Third, institutions with the best opportunities to teach young people citizenship--family, school, and government--have been ineffective. And fourth, young people themselves are asking for more ways to get involved. A four-part appendix is included containing: a completed summary questionnaire form from the youth and teacher surveys; an explanation of the survey methodology; focus group materials (discussion outline and overview of the participants); and materials related to the one-on-one interviews (questionnaires and a profile overview of the participants). (DB)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED324253

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
DONNA FOWLER
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

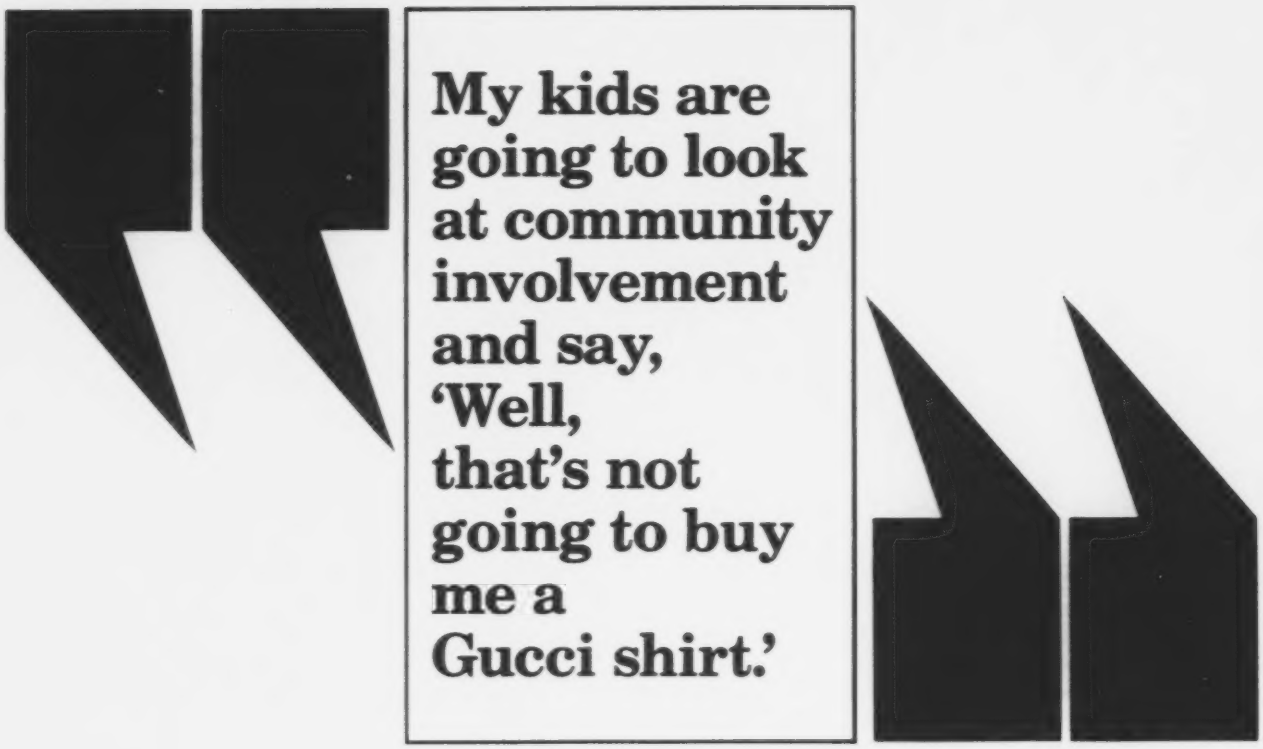
My kids are going to look at community involvement and say, 'Well, that's not going to buy me a Gucci shirt.'

SO 030 069

# DEMOCRACY'S NEXT GENERATION

A STUDY OF YOUTH AND TEACHERS

People For the American Way




# DEMOCRACY'S NEXT GENERATION

A STUDY OF YOUTH AND TEACHERS

People For the American Way

*People For the American Way is a 280,000-member nonpartisan constitutional liberties organization.*

A publication of
People For the American Way
2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-467-4999

© Copyright 1989 by People For the American Way
All rights reserved

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

People For the American Way wishes to thank the Rockefeller Foundation, Deer Creek Foundation, Taconic Foundation, and an anonymous donor for their generous support for Democracy's Next Generation.

## ADVISORY COMMISSION

When People For the American Way asked us to chair the Advisory Commission for Democracy's Next Generation, their study of the civic attitudes of America's young people, we were pleased to accept.

With backgrounds and interests as diverse as America itself, the members of the Advisory Commission were brought together by a shared and urgent concern that too many of our young people have only a tenuous attachment to democratic values and a meager understanding of the need for their participation in civic life. The study was an opportunity to learn more about the attitudes of young Americans toward the political process, public service, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The study confirmed that our concern was not misplaced, and it clearly indicates that sustained serious attention to this issue will be necessary to reconnect young people to our democratic system.

While Commission members have diverse perspectives on the findings of "Democracy's Next Generation," we are agreed that our society as a whole -- especially parents, educators, and political leaders -- must work with renewed intensity to inspire the involvement and commitment of our next generation of citizens and leaders.

**Hillary Rodham Clinton**
*Partner,* Rose Law Firm

**Hon. Terrel H. Bell**
*Former Secretary of Education*

Advisory Commission
*Co-Chairs*

## ADVISORY COMMISSION MEMBERS

Douglas Bailey
*Executive Publisher*
American Political Network

Marilyn Braveman
*Director of Education*
American Jewish Committee

Hon. John H. Buchanan
*Chairman*
People For the American Way

Don Cameron
*Executive Director*
National Education Association

Julius Chambers
*Director-Counsel*
NAACP Legal Defense and
Educational Fund, Inc.

Bernard Charles
*Progam Officer*
Carnegie Corporation of New York

Todd Clark
*Executive Director*
Constitutional Rights Foundation

Harriet Crane
*History Department Chair*
Episcopal Academy

Michael Durso
*Principal*
Yorktown High School

Paul Gagnon
*Scholar in Residence*
NEH/UCLA Center For History in the Schools

Bill Honig
*California Superintendent of Public Instruction*

Harold Howe II
*Senior Lecturer on Education Policy and Administration*
Harvard University

Roger Landrum
*Co-Director*
Youth Service America

Ed Meade
*Chief Program Officer*
Ford Foundation

Abigail Phillips
*Syndicated Columnist*

Stephen Rose
*Chairman*
Citizen Education Committee
National Council for the Social Studies

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
*Director*
Maryland Student Alliance

Mary Jane Turner
*Director of Civic Achievement*
Close Up Foundation

Adam Urbanski
*President*
Rochester Teachers Association

Rafael Valdivieso
*Vice President*
Hispanic Policy Development Project

Hon. Lowell Weicker, Jr.
*President*
Research!America

Patrick Welsh
*English teacher and author*
T.C. Williams High School

Bruce Williams
*Consultant*
Rockefeller Foundation

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**ABOUT THIS STUDY** ..... 9

**PREFACE:** Democracy's Next Generation ..... 11

**STUDY OF YOUTH AND TEACHERS**

Executive Summary ..... 25

Analysis of Key Findings and Recommendations ..... 35

Section I - Youth Outlook in General ..... 39

Section II - Attitudes Toward Community Service ..... 49

Section III - Attitudes Toward the Polity and the Nation ..... 65

Section IV - The Role of Schools in Forming Citizenship and Community Values ..... 95

Section V - Increasing Young People's Political and Community Engagement ..... 107

Findings from the One-on-One Interviews: Case Studies ..... 121

Conclusions ..... 141

**APPENDIX**

Filled-In Questionnaires for Youth and Teacher Surveys ..... 149

Methodology ..... 175

Focus Group Materials ..... 183

One-on-One Interviews: Questionnaire and Overview of the Participants ..... 191

## ABOUT THIS STUDY

People For the American Way believes it is time to sound the alarm about the toll that the growing disconnectedness of America's young people will exact from our democracy.

Since 18-year-olds won the right to vote in 1972, young people's rate of voter participation has slid steadily downward. The depth of many young people's alienation was alarmingly apparent in focus group interviews with non-voters aged 18-24 that People For the American Way conducted last year. When asked to name some qualities that make this country special, the young people sat in silence until one young man offered, "Cable TV." Asked how to encourage more young people to vote, one young woman replied, "Pay them." Others claimed that there was virtually no way to make registration and voting convenient enough to involve them, even if they could do so by mail.

Their views of politicians were negative: "wimps," "a disgrace," "not very smart." The comments of many suggested that participatory politics was alien, simply not part of their day-to-day lives. One young woman summed up the attitude in her family: "When the President comes on TV, we turn the TV off." Perhaps most troubling of all was their impoverished concept of citizenship: a good citizen is merely expected not to hurt anyone or break the law.

These responses underscore the citizenship crisis that has

prompted People For the American Way to step up its efforts to prepare our next generation to carry on the work of our democracy.

The first step is to create a voting culture that surrounds young people, by breaking down barriers that still stop American citizens of all ages from exercising this fundamental right. Our 1988 report, The Vanishing Voter, called attention to the problem of low voter participation, identified obstacles to registration, and suggested ideas to improve our nation's dismal turnout. On the legislative front, our Action Fund has worked on a bill designed to ease the process of voter registration, the crucial first step to boosting voter turnout.

We have also launched a range of initiatives targeted specifically to young people. People For developed and distributed First Vote, a teaching unit on voting and registration, to some 5,000 programs nationwide that serve disadvantaged young people -- the group least likely to register and vote. The Action Fund is working in Congress on behalf of legislation that would foster youth service programs to get young people actively involved in their communities.

Strengthening young people's commitment to citizenship will not be accomplished easily or quickly. But an important first step -- and the goal of this study -- is to understand in some depth what youth's attitudes toward civic participation are today.

## PREFACE: DEMOCRACY'S NEXT GENERATION

Today's young Americans are tomorrow's stewards of our democracy. Only an informed, involved citizenry will be able to steer our nation into a new century, meeting complex challenges ranging from illiteracy to global warming. If indeed eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, then the next generation of Americans must be ready when their time comes to take up the watch.

But we cannot expect our young people to be better citizens than the adults around them. Today, an ever-increasing number of Americans are reluctant to exercise even the most basic responsibilities of citizenship. Voter turnout in the 1988 election reached its lowest ebb in more than half a century. Political leaders, analysts and the media warn us that we are witnessing a disturbing slide toward apathy and disengagement from the political process.

If we are to reverse this dangerous trend, we must strengthen the civic values and expand the civic participation of democracy's next generation. People For the American Way commissioned this study to examine our youth's understanding of and commitment to three important aspects of citizenship in a democracy: meeting personal responsibilities, serving the community, and participating in the nation's political life.

Conducted for People For the American Way by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, this study assesses young people's views of such

topics as personal values and aspirations, community service, politics, images of America, concepts of citizenship, and influences on their notions of citizenship and civic involvement. Social studies teachers were also interviewed, on the assumption that they shoulder the major responsibility for citizenship education in our schools. The study has four components: telephone surveys with 1006 young people (ages 15-24); in-depth one-on-one interviews with another group of 100 youth; a second telephone survey of 405 social studies teachers, and focus group interviews with teachers conducted in Providence, Rhode Island and Kansas City, Missouri.

The study found, in brief:

1. Young people cherish America's freedoms without understanding what it takes to preserve them.

Young Americans today have absorbed only half of democracy's story, perceiving the virtue of our system of government only in the rights and freedoms it provides, not in the accompanying responsibilities it bestows. Most respondents equate being a good citizen with being a good person: good citizens are people who are helpful, generous, caring, and law abiding. Few see such duties as voting and being involved in (or even informed about) public affairs as important aspects of citizenship.

2. This generation is -- by its own admission and in the eyes of teachers -- markedly less involved and less interested in public life than previous generations.

Like every generation before them, today's young men and women are preoccupied with such personal concerns as career success, family life and individual happiness. But this generation differs in its diminished willingness to get involved in activities outside this personal sphere, young people and their teachers agree. Teachers see low citizen involvement as a serious threat to democracy.

3. Institutions with the best opportunity to teach young people citizenship -- family, school and government -- have let them down.

Parents -- identified by young people as the strongest influence on their civic values -- are failing to fulfill this role, according to most teachers and young people. Schools could also do more to get young people involved, young people and teachers agree. Our political leadership is failing dismally to set the kind of example that would attract more young people into public life, as evident in youth's extremely negative attitude toward politics and politicians.

4. Young people themselves point the way out of our citizenship crisis by asking for more ways to get involved.

Many young people want to serve in their communities, and are only waiting to be asked. They support a community service requirement in high school. Those who have participated in community service activities gain a strengthened sense of investment in civic life.

## DEMOCRACY'S NEXT GENERATION: GROUP PORTRAIT

A snapshot of young America today captures a group in transition. The young people surveyed, who range in age from 15 to 24 years old and come from widely varied socioeconomic backgrounds, are moving gradually toward the full assumption of adult responsibilities. Most are just beginning to awaken to the larger political world of ideas and decision making outside their homes, schools and neighborhoods. Many face financial or family stresses that inhibit their ability to become more active in their communities.

Even in the best of circumstances, young people face a difficult transition into full participation in our democracy. Our findings indicate that -- due in large part to the failure of adult society to instill strong citizenship values and inspire involvement -- today's young Americans are ill-prepared to accept this responsibility.

Young people cherish America's freedoms without understanding what it takes to preserve them.

The nation's youth clearly appreciate the democratic freedoms that, they say, make theirs the "best country in the world to live in." Asked to describe in their own words what makes America special, 63 percent named the rights and freedoms our citizens enjoy. Like all young people, they are enchanted by "the freedom to do as we please when we please," in the words of one respondent.

But young people fail to grasp the other half of the democratic equation: the responsibility to participate in the hard work of self-government. This incomplete understanding emerged vividly when young people were asked to describe a "good citizen." To them, the task of being a good citizen carries no additional meaning or special responsibilities beyond simply being a "good person:" one who helps people in need or is generous or caring. "Honest, good friend, trustworthy," was one typical characterization. Remarkably, only 12 percent of the youth surveyed linked citizenship to one basic duty of self-government: voting.

This generation -- by its own admission and in the eyes of teachers -- is markedly less involved and less interested in public life than previous generations.

This is a generation overwhelmingly preoccupied with events within their personal sphere. Asked to assign a rank to their life goals on a scale of one to ten, 72 percent gave a nine or a ten to career success, 68 percent to having a close-knit family life, and 57 percent to enjoying life and having a good time. Being involved in helping the community to be a better place ranked dead last, chosen as a priority by only 24 percent.

Young people say they feel too pressured by the demands in their personal lives to get involved in civic activities. Fifty-three percent blame demands such as "getting good grades or getting a good

job" for their lack of involvement. Teachers acknowledge that many young people are grappling with genuine stresses such as family problems or economic hardship. "Kids today, some of them are really trying to cope, just to cope," observed one teacher. But youth's focus on the personal is sometimes seen as less legitimate: "My kids are going to look at [community involvement] and say, 'Well, that's not going to buy me a Gucci shirt...what's in it for me?'" another teacher commented.

Personal concerns appear to eclipse any significant attention to the political life of our nation. By 45 to 21 percent, teachers see today's high school students as less interested in politics and public affairs than their counterparts a decade ago. "A very small percentage of them care, and a very small percentage are interested," according to a teacher. "The others think it is boring, boring, boring." Only 16 percent of youth report having a "great deal" of interest in current events, politics and government.

Boredom and apathy are also reflected in dwindling civic involvement. Three-fourths of young people agree strongly or slightly with the statement that "young people seem less involved these days than they were in the past." Forty-six percent of social studies teachers say that the students in their classrooms today are less active and involved than those of ten years ago.

The disconnection young people apparently feel between their own lives and the life of the nation becomes especially telling when

they are asked to think about the future. While a strong majority are confident about their own personal prospects, only 42 percent said they feel optimistic about America's future, with a narrow plurality-- 47 percent -- stating that they are worried that America's best years might be behind us. This generation seems unaware that the fate of the nation is intertwined with their own individual destinies.

Institutions with the best opportunity to teach young people citizenship -- family, school and government -- have let them down.

Young people look to their parents as by far the most important influence on the development of their civic values. But the evidence suggests that parents often fail to deliver on these expectations. Eighty-four percent of teachers cite lack of parental encouragement as a major reason for the non-involvement of youth. As one teacher summed up this point, "If parents don't have time to deal with the Girl Scouts or the heart campaign or politicking in the community or cleaning up their neighborhood, the kids won't." Nearly half of young people also highlight this cause of their non-involvement.

Schools -- another key source of citizenship preparation -- get mixed grades. Forty-three percent of young people cite schools' inadequacies as a major cause of their lack of community involvement. While school is the leading source of community service options for those youth who are active, only 20 percent of teachers characterize their school's commitment to community service as "very strong."

Only half say their school has a voter registration program that "aggressively tries to register eligible students."

Political leaders are not only failing to impart citizenship values, they are actually alienating young people from public life. Fifty-four percent of teachers cite the poor example set by politicians as a strong reason for youth's non-involvement. Most young people (53 percent) think that they can trust the government in Washington to do what's right only "some" or "none" of the time. As one young woman put it, "There's been so much scandal and so much sleaze and fraud going on in the government today....You get to the point where you think that it's not worth being involved in, and that all politicians are corrupt, so why be involved in it?"

Young people themselves point the way out of our citizenship crisis by asking for more ways to get involved.

America's youth has an abundance of good intentions. Overwhelmingly, they describe themselves as "likely" to engage in such activities as helping an elderly neighbor or working an hour a week on a community project. By 58 percent to 38 percent, today's youth reject the notion that "people should take care of themselves and shouldn't expect others to do things for them."

They strongly support the idea of community service. Fifty-one percent think that such service should be a high-school graduation requirement, and an even larger proportion (89 percent) suggest that

volunteering for such service be rewarded with school credit. Both teachers and students argue for a more hands-on, participatory approach to teaching about citizenship, and they say this should start at an early age. One young man, active in his community, explains: "As soon as you turn eighteen, it's not like you can just switch on our 'vote' modes and go out and vote. I think if we were encouraged to be involved earlier on, then we'd definitely have a bigger [showing]."

Those young people who have gotten involved in community service provide a clear illustration of youth's potential. A sizable minority (38 percent) of our young people report having performed some type of community or neighborhood service within the past year.

Within this group are some exceptional young people who provide a profile of active, engaged youth. The case studies of six of these young men and women, published in the body of this report, reveal that those who serve strengthen their ties to the community, gain a broader sense of their responsibilities, and -- perhaps most important -- get a taste of the rewards of participation.

Craig, a college student in Spartanburg, South Carolina, has worked on a range of projects from helping the homeless to environmental cleanup activities. He is critical of the job schools and government leaders have done in encouraging youth involvement. He says the message youth need to hear is that "the services they're going to get involved in are worthwhile, and the people will appreciate it more than they can imagine."

The example set by her grandfather's community involvement inspired 16-year-old Jill of Independence, Missouri, to follow his lead. She has done volunteer work for the elderly and environmental causes, and the satisfaction she gets from this work keeps her active and involved. "I really like to help people," she says.

More young people can be stirred from disengagement to action if society makes this a priority mission. The message of this study's results is clear: our nation must ask our young people to participate and show them how they can.

## AMERICA'S CHALLENGE: Shaping Good Citizens

Our nation can only expect democracy's next generation to be prepared to assume their citizenship responsibilities if adult society does its part to get them ready. We need a top-to-bottom rekindling of America's special commitment: to one another and to our democratic system. While remaining realistic about the limitations and barriers facing many of our youth, our society must try harder to ensure that young Americans:

- Understand that their rights as citizens of this democracy carry with them accompanying reponsibilities.
- Are registered to vote, if eligible, and aware of how and where to exercise this right.
- Participate in a service project as a requirement for high

school graduation.

- Are well informed about how democracy works, the many avenues of citizen participation in a democratic system, and the major issues confronting our nation.

Helping our young people to develop a citizenship ethic and sense of responsibility to one another will take a team effort. Therefore, we issue this challenge to those who have the most power to effect improvements:

- **A Challenge to All Eligible Citizens:** to register and vote.

There could be no stronger positive signal to young people than a surge in voter participation during the 1990s.

- **A Challenge to Parents:** to create a "culture of citizenship" in each household by voting, keeping informed about public affairs, participating in community activities, and sharing these experiences with children. Parents serve as important "citizen role models" for their children, just as they are models as family heads and breadwinners. Children can begin to learn the importance of involvement at home, by being assigned regular responsibilities appropriate to their ages and participating in family-initiated service projects in their neighborhoods.

• **A Challenge to Schools:** to restore an emphasis on their earliest traditional mission -- the preparation of informed citizens capable of self-government. Schools should develop more community service opportunities, building on the good programs already available and making sure these are fully integrated into the curriculum. Schools should focus on participatory approaches to teaching youth about citizenship, including providing a forum for the debate of public issues. And, finally, schools should see that all eligible students are registered to vote by the time they graduate.

• **A Challenge to Political Leaders:** to set an example of leadership for young people, to spend time with them and listen to their concerns, and to make an active effort to encourage their involvement in public life. Elected officials are responsible not only for governing soundly, but also for upholding high standards of conduct and discourse that inspire citizen activism. They should use the "bully pulpit" of public office to promote service, civic involvement, and voter participation among young people.

• **A Challenge to Young Americans:** to recognize that the freedoms they cherish depend on their readiness to assume the stewardship of our democracy. While adults must do more to open avenues of involvement for youth, young people must be prepared to meet them halfway. In the words of one young American in this survey, "the community is theirs and they should work for it; that's why they should get involved."

# DEMOCRACY'S NEXT GENERATION: A SURVEY OF YOUTH VALUES IN AMERICA CONDUCTED FOR PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary presents the key findings from a major study of young Americans' civic values. Commissioned by People for the American Way, Peter D. Hart Research Associates undertook this project with the goal of exploring how today's youth see themselves as American citizens, and how that identity affects their own lives and their perspective on and interaction with democratic government and society as a whole.

Results are based on a nationwide telephone survey of 1,006 people between the ages of 15 and 24 and a similar telephone survey of 405 social studies teachers. In order to lend perspective and depth to this research, Hart Research also conducted 100 hour-long one-on-one interviews with young people and two focus groups among social studies teachers. All aspects of the research took place from late April through June 1989.

## An Unbalanced Equation

Young people have learned only half of America's story. Consistent with the priority they place on personal happiness, young people reveal notions of America's unique character that emphasize freedom and license almost to the complete exclusion of service or participation. Although they clearly appreciate the democratic freedoms that, in their view, make theirs the "best country in the world to live in," they fail to perceive a need to reciprocate by exercising the duties and responsibilities of good citizenship.

- In an open-ended question, young people were asked, "If someone from another country asked you to explain what makes America special, what would you tell them?" The most common responses by far emphasize rights and freedoms, mentioned by 63%. Freedom of speech and press is mentioned by 23%, and freedom of choice is mentioned by 21%. Nineteen percent paint America as "the land of opportunities."

- Almost out of range in young people's vision of their country's unique qualities are such fundamental privileges and liberties as the right to vote (5%), freedom of religion (5%), and women's rights (4%).

An Inward-looking Generation

In terms of personal values, young Americans consider professional success, family life, and personal happiness far more important than community involvement and public life. Young people and teachers agree that this elevation of the individual over the collective interest is more pronounced among current youth than it was in years past.

- Surveyed youth were asked to rank each of a series of potential life goals on a scale of 1 to 10, on which a rating of "10" represents an extremely important goal. Following are the proportions who give each goal a "9" or "10":

| | |
|---|---|
| Being successful in your job or career | 72% |
| Having a close-knit family life | 68% |
| Enjoying yourself and having a good time | 57% |
| Doing well financially, making a lot of money | 51% |
| Being a good American who cares about the good of the country | 49% |
| Being involved in your religion and living up to your religious principles | 38% |
| Being involved in helping your community be a better place | 24% |

- A substantial majority of young people (72%) agree with the statement, "Young people seem less involved these days than they were in the past."

- Social studies teachers concur. By 37% to 16%, they consider today's students less likely to become good citizens than students were a decade ago. Also, teachers believe today's students are less likely to get involved in community affairs (46% to 18%), and are less interested in (45% to 21%) and less knowledgeable about (37% to 26%) politics and public affairs.

## Young People as Community Members

At present, a large majority of young people are not involved in any form of community service. Thirty-eight percent report that they have performed some type of community or neighborhood service activity within the past year. The good news is that many surveyed youth suggest they will probably engage in such service in the future. Large majorities indicate they would willingly assist an elderly neighbor, help a friend who is battling a drug problem, collect money for a needy cause, or give an hour of their time each week to work on a community project.

Most young people, however, show a marked disinclination to enter military service, perhaps the most traditional form of national service. Although a majority respond affirmatively, a significant minority indicate they would not volunteer even in the face of a clear national emergency.

- Young people were asked how likely they are to engage in each of several activities or whether they have actually done so. Following are selected responses:

| | |
|---|---|
| Help an elderly neighbor | 96% |
| Help a friend with a drug problem | 95% |
| Collect money for charity | 91% |
| Work an hour a week on a community project | 81% |
| Work in a political campaign | 36% |
| Join the military | 33% |

- Surveyed youth reject the notion that "People should take care of themselves and shouldn't expect others to do things for them" by 58% to 35%.

## Young People as Citizens and Political Participants

Most young people equate being a good citizen with being a good person, rather than with being politically engaged. To them, citizenship is more about compassion and practice of the "golden rule" than about voting or

taking part in national affairs. This personal as opposed to collective notion of citizenship is further evidence that young people have only a limited understanding of their role as citizens; they tend to view their part reactively, instead of in terms of actively fulfilling the responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

- Surveyed youth were asked how they would describe a good citizen in their own words. The dominant answer, offered by 43%, is that a good citizen helps people in need or is generous or caring. The next most frequent responses, volunteered by one-third each, are that a good citizen helps and cares about the community (33%) and adheres to the law (33%). Only 12% suggest that voting and involvement in politics is a critical part of good citizenship.

- In contrast, social studies teachers portray citizenship as much more active and participatory, with nearly half volunteering that a good citizen votes and takes part in the political process (47%). More than one-quarter each say good citizenship entails observance of the law (27%), being informed (26%), and being involved and concerned (26%).

These respondents do not seem to be apathetic people; they seem instead to be well-intentioned but in possession of weak citizenship skills. The emphasis by many young people on compassion, coupled with the fact that a substantial minority have indeed performed and, they report, experienced the intangible rewards of community service within the past year, suggests an underlying generosity of spirit. As noted, however, the focus is largely on the most personal level--on young people's families, friends, and neighborhoods.

Young people feel no compulsion to participate in the political system in large part because their focus tends to be directed inward, as well as because the political process and national affairs seem alien. They manifest little interest in government, admit a disinclination to get

involved in politics, express cynicism about public officials, and honor only in the breach their civic obligation to vote.

- Sixty percent of surveyed youth feel tney know just some or very little about how government works. Similarly, 57% indicate that they follow politics and government in the media either just some or very little. A large majority (70%) agree that "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on." Contrary to what we might expect, uncertainty about the political process does not decline with age.

- When asked how much they trust the federal government, a 53% majority of young people say they trust Washington to do right only some or none of the time. Moreover, lack of confidence in government increases with age.

- Just 36% of all young people say they have already volunteered to work on a political campaign or are pretty likely to do so.

- Given a list of various possible reasons many young people refrain from greater political or community involvement, a majority cite competing pressures such as getting good grades or getting a good job.

Young people learn their civic values at home. Surveyed youth and teachers agree by commanding margins that parents have the most decisive influence on young people's notions of country, citizenship, and moral responsibility. Both youth and teachers agree that parents will, by necessity, be key players in any future efforts to change youth attitudes toward service, politics, and national affairs. Any coordinated effort to promote civic values must recognize that these values are primarily learned at home.

While clearly second to family influences, schools have played an important role in young people's development as citizens, and could play an even more important one in the future. Most young people give their schools' civics curricula at least a passing grade. On the whole, they

report finding their courses in government and civics as neither more nor less stimulating than other classes. Moreover, a significant number of the young people who take part in community service activities do so through their schools.

- o A commanding majority of surveyed youth (70%) say their parents have had the greatest influence on their thinking about citizenship and what it means to be a good American. Teachers come in a distant second (mentioned by 21%).

- o According to the 75% of surveyed youth who have had courses in civics or government, most found these courses about equal in interest to other courses and subjects.

In reaction to selected proposals for promoting greater involvement, surveyed youth in general favor carrots and reject sticks. Proposals such as offering extra credit to high school students who perform community service meet with broad approbation, while a plan that would require service as a prerequisite for federal student loans and similar benefits meets with stiff opposition.

- o Following are several community service proposals and the percentage of young people who favor and oppose each one.

| | Favor % | Oppose % |
|---|---|---|
| Offer extra credit to high school students who volunteer | 89 | 10 |
| Offer extra federal benefits to national volunteers | 87 | 11 |
| Require service as a prerequisite to high school graduation | 51 | 46 |
| Have a federal law requiring one year of civilian or military service | 22 | 75 |
| Having a federal law requiring service as a prerequisite for student loans and similar benefits | 31 | 67 |

Social Studies Teachers

Surveyed social studies teachers and those who participated in the focus groups see declines in voting and other forms of civic involvement as a serious threat to American democracy. As noted, they have a relatively harsh view of current students' citizenship skills, level of involvement, interest in public affairs, and awareness of politics.

- Given a series of potential threats to democracy, 62% of surveyed teachers consider "low voter turnout and involvement in the political process" a very serious threat to American democracy--the only potential threat seen as very serious by a majority. An additional 19% consider it a fairly serious threat.

Teachers lay a substantial part of the blame for young people's retreat from public life at parents' door. They agree that civic values are formed at home, and they believe parents have failed to uphold this responsibility. Teachers also express some sympathy for the pressures today's young people face, and believe the schools themselves have just a limited commitment to instilling good civic values and habits. From their point of view, key players in the education system--school administrators, boards of education, and even social studies textbook authors--care less than teachers themselves about instilling a knowledge of citizenship and encouraging involvement in public life.

- Eighty-four percent of surveyed teachers say parents' lack of encouragement is a strong reason students are not more involved in politics or public affairs. The existence of other pressures on young people, such as getting good grades or getting a good job, is cited as a strong reason by 67% of teachers. They also attribute lack of involvement to politicians' failure to set a good example to attract young people to public life (54%) and to the simple idea that no one asks or shows young people how to get involved (56%).

- While 72% of surveyed teachers feel their fellow teachers care a great deal or quite a bit about citizenship and public participation, only 54% think the local school board shares their concern, and only 43% think the authors of social studies texts do so. Moreover, teachers consider the social studies curriculum at their school less successful at encouraging students to vote and participate in politics as adults than it is at developing an understanding of and interest in current events, or in teaching students the basic facts and principles of American democracy. Furthermore, a 55% majority say their school neither requires nor encourages some form of participation in community service from its students.

- Three-quarters of surveyed social studies teachers (74%) favor making community service a requirement for graduation from high school--a suggestion supported by a bare majority (51%) of young people themselves (and by just 48% of youth in the affected age group).

# ANALYSIS OF KEY SURVEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

## Introduction

The generation of young people now in high school, college, or their first job soon will stand at the nation's helm. Challenging times await them; in large part, it is they who will have to meet any forthcoming tests of the vibrancy and strength of our society and our system of government.

As we anticipate the challenges that lie ahead, it is important to ask how prepared young people are to deal with them. How interested in and knowledgeable about their country's democratic process are today's young Americans? Moreover, how likely and willing are they to participate actively in their society, and what are the favorable and unfavorable influences on their motivations?

In order to provide some answers to these and other questions, People for the American Way commissioned Peter D. Hart Research Associates to undertake a major study of "Democracy's Next Generation." The project comprises multiple phases: 1) a telephone survey of 1006 American youth age 15 to 24, conducted between April 28 and May 24, 1989; 2) a parallel survey among 405 social studies teachers, also conducted by telephone, from May 26 to June 14, 1989; 3) 100 face-to-face, tape recorded interviews, each approximately an hour long, with young people throughout the nation; and 4) two focus group sessions with teachers in Providence, Rhode Island (June 14), and in Kansas City, Missouri (June 15).

The purpose of the study was to explore the community and civic values of Americans aged 15 to 24. How do young people see themselves vis-a-vis their community and their country? How do they balance their personal goals and desires with the obligations of service and citizenship? To what extent have they put those values into action? Notions about and attitudes toward service and citizenship will help shape the responses these people offer to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

# SECTION I

## YOUTH OUTLOOK IN GENERAL

This section presents our findings from general questions about young people's sense of their own future and the larger world into which they are headed. Overall, most youth are optimistic for themselves, but expect their success will be hard won.

Young people see the challenges they face as greater than those their parents confronted; at the same time, they look forward to a prosperous and fulfilling personal life. Seventy-one percent of surveyed young people agree with the statement, "I feel pretty confident that things will work out for me, and the future looks promising." Only one in four agree with the more pessimistic alternative, "I'm worried about the future because I'm not sure how well things will work out for me."

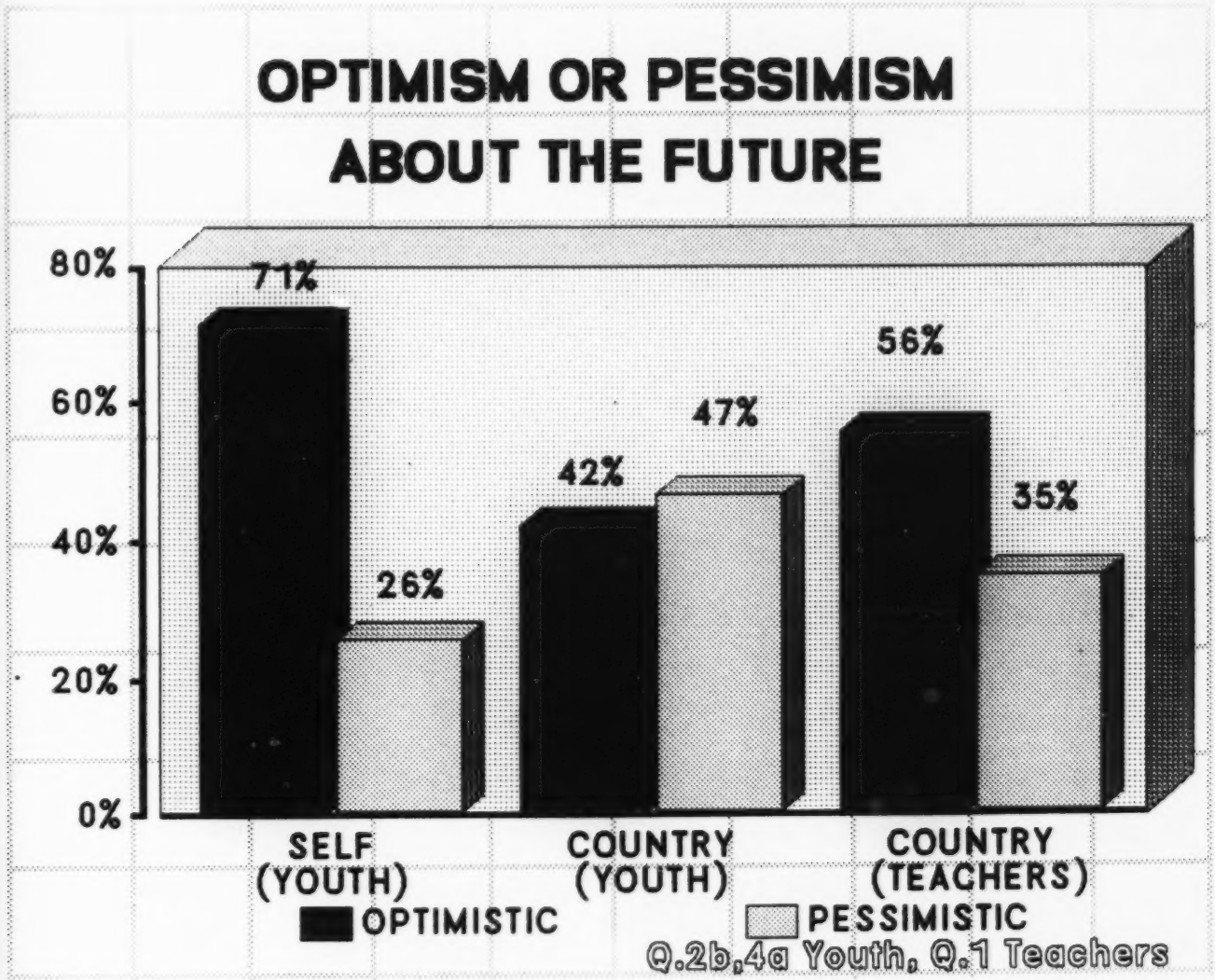
Young men express slightly more personal optimism (73%) than do young women (67%). Also, as might be expected, optimism tends to run somewhat stronger among better educated people and those from more upscale families. Even among lower income respondents, however, a 63% majority are upbeat about their personal future. The lowest level of optimism revealed by any subgroup occurs among those who display a low interest in government (53%).

This strong showing of optimism comes despite equally strong agreement--by 68% to 23%--that it is harder to be a young person today than it was when respondents' parents were kids. Participants in the one-on-one interviews explicate this sentiment. "There's so much pressure with life and everything--school," comments a Bridgeport, West Virginia, 17-year-old. "I don't have enough time to do everything." A college senior in Atlanta concurs, adding, "If you had a college degree [in the past], it was the thing to have and you could find a really good job with it. Now it's like you have to have a college degree or no one is going to look at you, and even though you have a college degree, [it] doesn't mean they are going to

hire you." In addition, quite a few of the one-on-one respondents cite drugs and sex as either distractions or, in the case of drugs and alcohol, avenues of escape from stresses their parents probably did not encounter.

Young people are less sanguine in their outlook for the nation as a whole. A 47% to 42% plurality take the pessimistic stance in responding to the question, "When you think about the future for America, do you feel more optimistic that America's best years as a country are still ahead of us, or do you feel worried that America's best years might already be behind us?"

Among demographic groups, young women are significantly more negative about the country than are young men, saying they think America's best years have passed by 50% to 39%. Males agree, but only by the barest margin (45% to 44%). Minorities disagree on the nation's future. While black youth express the highest level of pessimism (59% to 31%), young Hispanics are the only group among whom a majority (52% to 43%) say America's best years lie ahead.


OPTIMISM OR PESSIMISM
ABOUT THE FUTURE
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
71%
26%
42%
47%
56%
35%
SELF (YOUTH)
COUNTRY (YOUTH)
COUNTRY (TEACHERS)
OPTIMISTIC
PESSIMISTIC
Q.2b,4a Youth, Q.1 Teachers

Interpretation

To the extent these youth conclude that their own well-being is independent of that of the surrounding society, they may fail to sense enough of a stake in the community to become involved. Insecurity about the nation's future may intensify personal anxiety and lend greater urgency to personal fulfillment. In any initiative designed to foster better citizenship and civic skills, therefore, it may be necessary to inculcate a belief that personal and national well-being are inextricably connected.

Young people were also asked to volunteer, in their own words, what problems facing the nation are at the top of their priority list. World peace, a nuclear arms freeze, drugs, and homelessness dominate the responses. When asked to choose from a list those goals for the country that are most important to them personally, respondents mention most often helping poor people and the homeless (49%), preventing drug abuse and stopping illegal drugs (46%), and improving the education that young people get (38%).

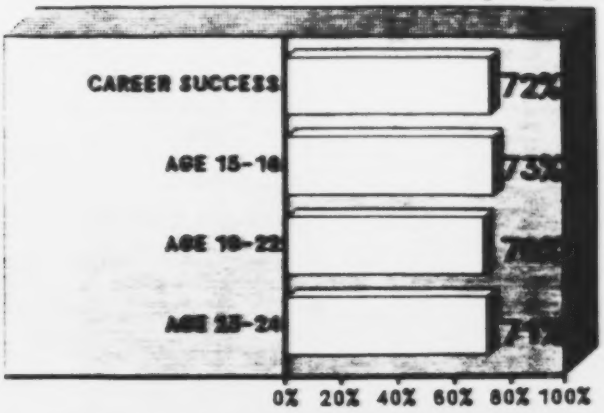
Young people aspire above all to career success, having a family, and enjoying life. In general, they are much more likely to seek personal satisfaction than to express interest in contributing to their community or nation. Asked to rank each of a series of potential life goals on a ten-point scale (with "10" representing an extremely important goal), 72% give "being successful in your job or career" a 9 or 10. Other top goals include "having a close-knit family life" (68% rate it a 9 or 10), "enjoying yourself and having a good time" (57%), and "doing well financially, making a lot of money" (51%). Blacks are significantly more likely than are whites or Hispanics to emphasize career success: 81% say this is a top goal. Having a good time is more important to younger

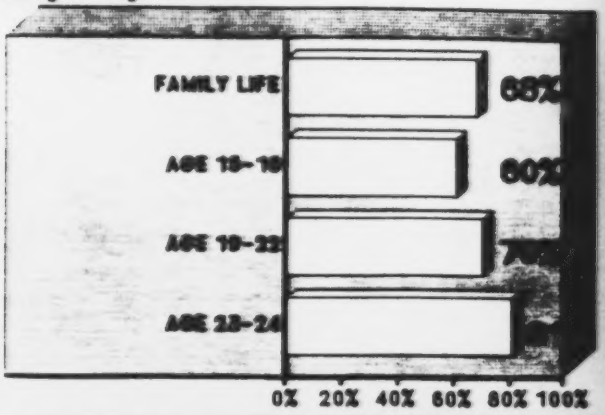
respondents: 62% of respondents age 15 to 18 rank it very high in importance, compared to 57% of respondents age 23 to 24. Older respondents, on the other hand, are much more likely to value a good family life, with 81% of that group considering it a top goal, compared to 60% of 15- to 18-year-olds.

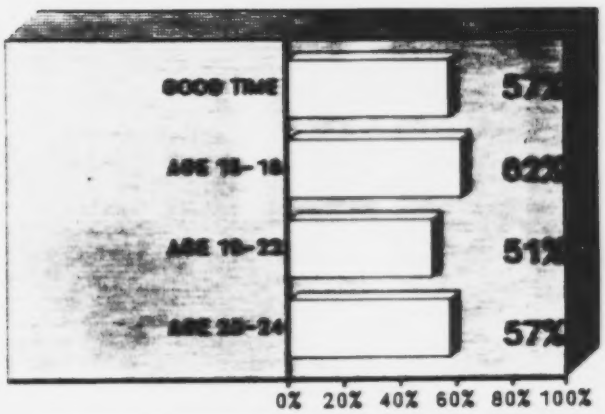
By contrast, fewer than one-quarter of all respondents (24%) consider it very important to be involved in helping their community be a better place. Not quite half (49%) say the same about being a good American who cares about the good of the country. (As we discuss later in the report, this response must be read in light of young people's notions of what constitutes good citizenship.) Subgroups that are more likely than average to place a high value on serving the community include blacks (33%), respondents age 23 to 24 (31%), youth who have participated in volunteer activities during the past year (31%), residents of the south (29%), and frequent churchgoers (30%). Respondents living in the south are also more likely to place greater value on being a good American (59%), as are 23- to 24-year-olds (57%) and self-described political conservatives (55%). Among groups less likely to consider service or patriotism as important life goals are college students from affluent families, young people with college-educated parents, and young people from mid-level professional families.

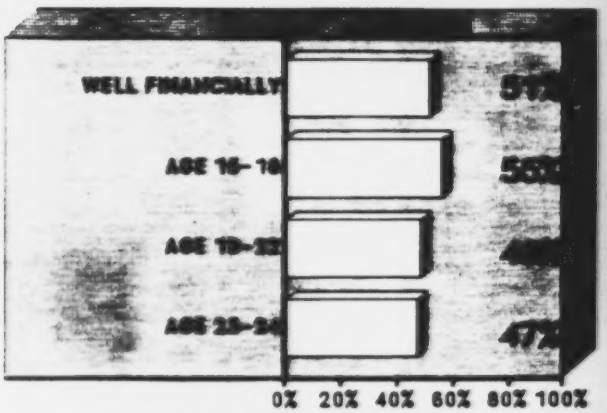
# IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED GOALS

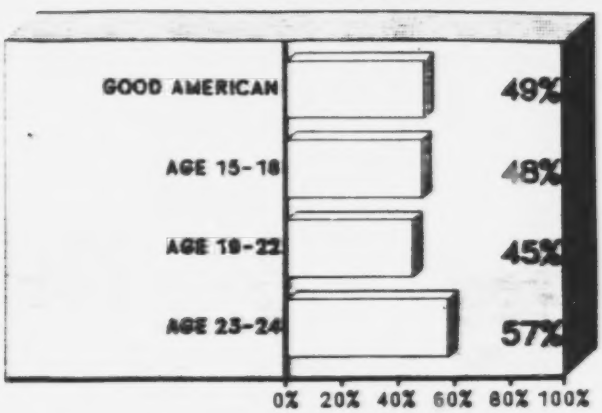
## % Saying Extremely Important

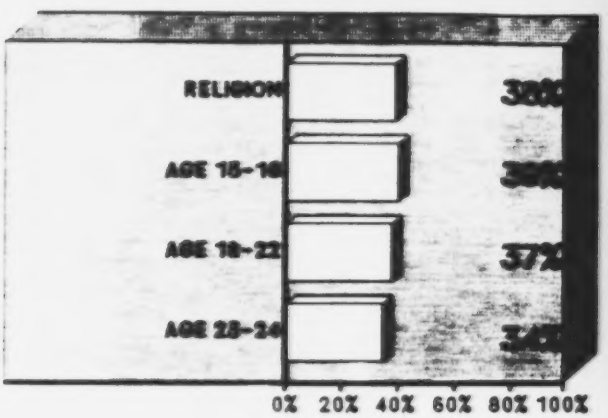


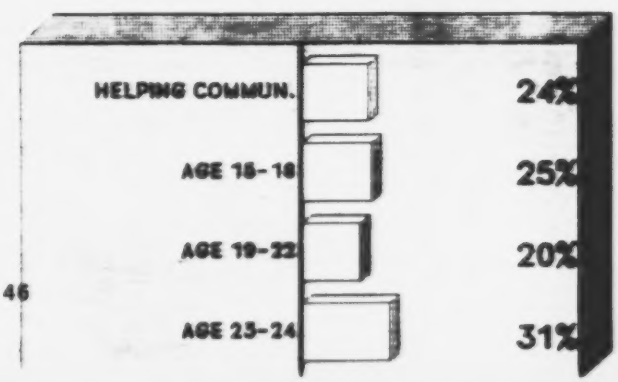




Q.3 Youth

Young people and social studies teachers concur that the current generation is less likely to value civic participation or community service than were past generations. Almost three-fourths of the young people we surveyed agree either strongly (43%) or slightly (29%) with the statement, "Young people seem less involved these days than they were in the past." Only 9% strongly disagree. Nearly half the social studies teachers (46%) say the current crop of high school students is less active and involved than were students ten years ago, while just 18% think today's students are more active and 36% think the generations are about the same on this measure.

## Interpretation

Adolescence is an inherently uncertain and self-absorbed period. Young people's life goals may in part reflect the stage of life through which youth are passing. Social studies teachers in both focus groups suggest this might be the case. "I think early on in high school, just coming into senior high, there is less social concern, more self-concern," says a Kansas City teacher. "As kids get [older], and they are about to face the world, then they start to become more socially concerned, . . . so there is a kind of delayed concern." A Providence parochial school teacher agrees: "Maybe there is a spark that comes out later when they are ready for it." The survey results bear out this point, as respondents age 15 to 18 tend to favor the more "self-oriented" goals by higher margins than do their older counterparts. Conversely, 23- to 24-year-olds place a comparatively higher value on the more outward-looking goals of being a good American or offering service to the community. These differences are modest, however, and the general pattern of inward orientation appears to persist into young adulthood. In terms of young people's priorities, being involved in community work or meeting the challenges and responsibilities of citizenship are simply much less important than are goals directly related to young people's own lives and personal circumstances.

Young people get their citizenship values from their parents. Respondents were given a list of individuals and asked, "Of the people on the following list, who has had the biggest effect on your thinking about good citizenship and what it means to be a good American?" Parents are the overwhelming favorite, cited by 70% of surveyed young people. Teachers are a distant second (21%), followed by friends (12%), the president (9%), and religious leaders (9%). Clearly, young people take their cues about citizenship from those closest to them.

## SECTION II

## ATTITUDES TOWARD COMMUNITY SERVICE

## Youth and Community Involvement

The community is the closest manifestation of the outside world beyond self and family. While the issues and concerns of the nation as a whole might seem abstract and remote from everyday life, the needs and concerns of the community are more visible, more tangible, and more clearly tied to young people's own existence. Presumably, it would follow that young people have a comparatively strong sense of connection with and commitment to their community. The survey results bear out this presumption in part, but suggest that with regard to community service, good intentions outpace good deeds by a considerable margin.

Reasons for low community involvement vary, but three factors stand out. First, young people feel overwhelmed by the pressures and expectations they must contend with. Second, parents do not encourage their children to get involved. And third, not enough effort is undertaken by the schools and the community to create service opportunities.

Despite the distractions, pressures, and paucity of ready-at-hand service opportunities, a significant minority of survey respondents --almost four in ten--indicate they have performed some community service in the past year. It is difficult to measure, however, what distinguishes those who serve from those who do not.

Most young people are not involved in any form of community service. Less than two-fifths of respondents (38%) say they have performed any community or neighborhood service activity within the past year. The proportion of volunteers remains fairly constant throughout almost all major subgroups. Most likely to have volunteered are people for whom community involvement is an important life goal (49%), those with one to two years of college (45%), college students from families of modest means

(45%), frequent churchgoers (44%), voters (43%), and respondents with a high interest in politics and government (43%). Women (41%) are more likely to have volunteered than are men (35%). By an identical margin, self-designated political liberals are more likely than conservatives to have volunteered. Among those least likely to have volunteered are people with a low interest in government (29%), high school graduates who did not go on to college (30%), and high school students from lower income families (31%).

Even the groups with the highest level of participation pale next to social studies teachers. Although their self-reported involvement may be inflated, 89% of surveyed teachers say they take part regularly in extracurricular activities, such as political campaigns, public interest groups, charities, or local community service organizations.

Interpretation

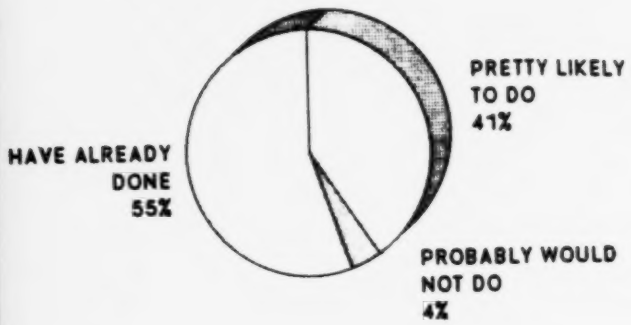
> Propensity to serve is an elusive quality. As we have indicated, there are few demographic differences between young people who tend to be involved in community service and those who do not. One of the more intriguing findings here is that respondents who comprise the group we identify as having a low interest in politics and government are less likely than average to have performed any community or neighborhood service in the past two years. Their statistically significant disinclination to serve may point to a connection between community service and citizenship that should be explored.

On the other side of the coin, many young people suggest that they will probably engage in community service in the future. Surveyed youth were given a list of various community acts and asked whether they are likely to perform them. Large majorities say they would assist an elderly neighbor, get help for a friend with a drug problem, collect money for a needy cause,

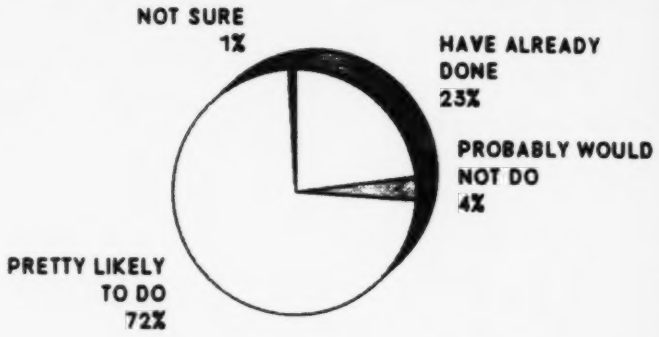
or volunteer an hour a week on a community project. In some cases, particularly with regard to the elderly neighbor, a large proportion of youth indicate they have already served. There is no clear pattern suggesting that, as young people get older, they are more likely to have performed these acts. The only exception is collecting money for a needy cause, which 38% of respondents age 23 to 24 say they have already done, compared to 29% of 15- to 18-year-olds.

# IS RESPONDENT LIKELY OR UNLIKELY TO DO SELECTED ACTIVITIES?

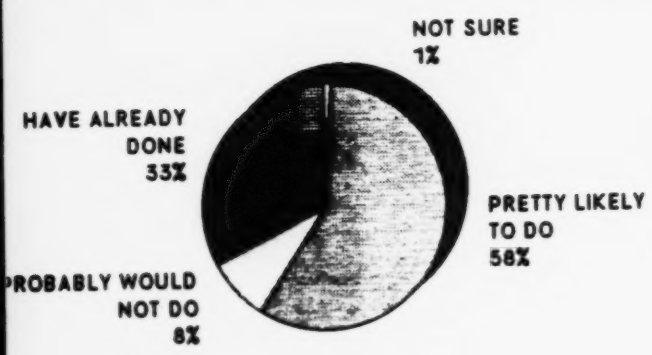
## HELP ELDERLY NEIGHBOR



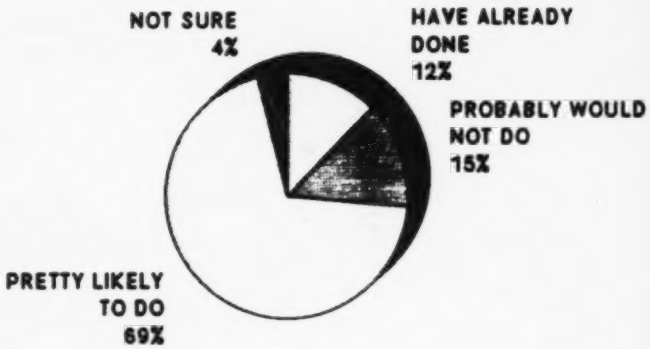

## HELP FRIEND WHO ABUSES DRUGS




## COLLECT MONEY FOR NEEDY CAUSE




## VOLUNTEER ONE HOUR/WEEK ON COMMUNITY PROJECT




Q.8 Youth

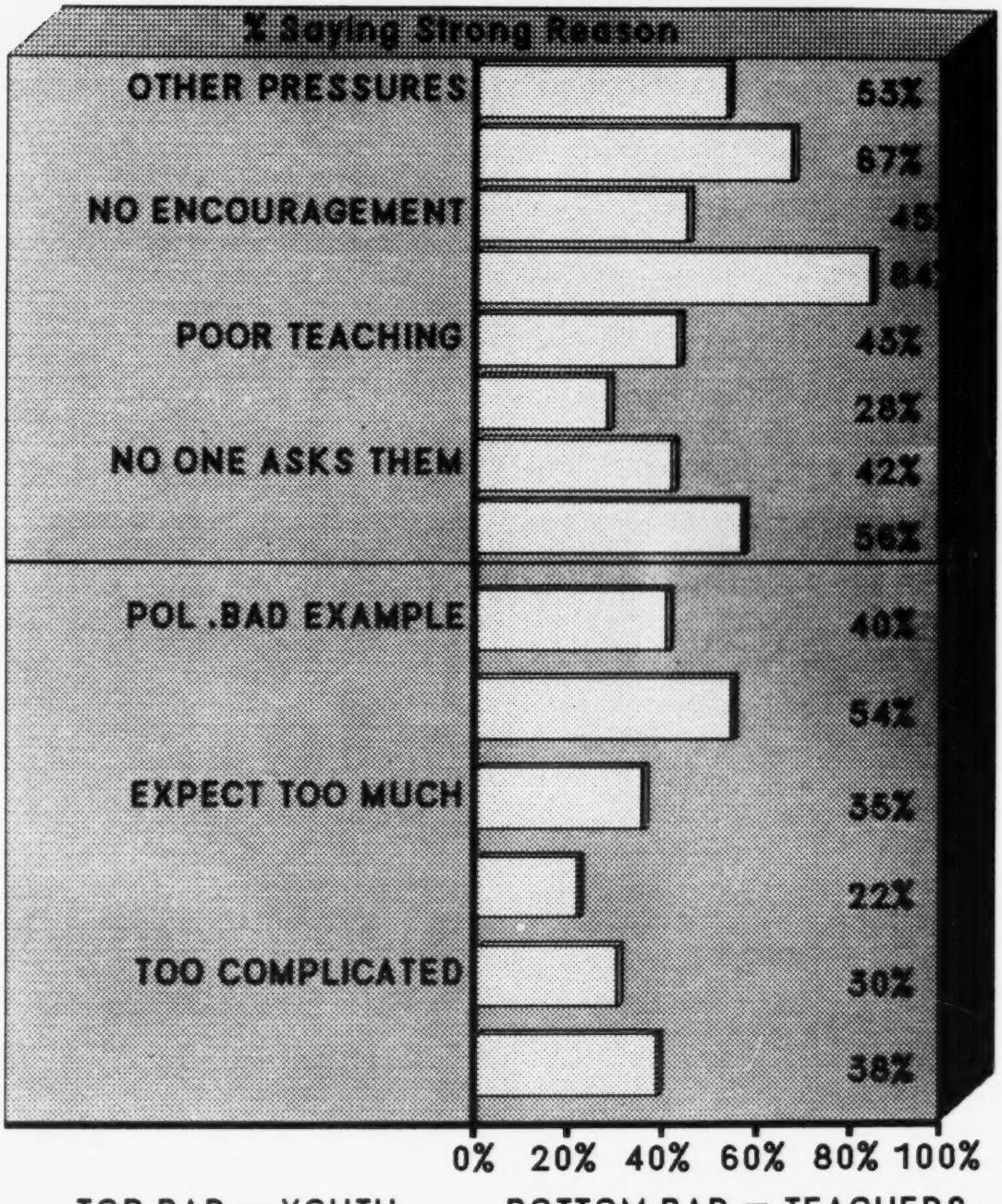
Surveyed young people were also given a list of hypothetical programs and asked in which ones they would most likely become involved. Dominant among the choices are working with children in day-care centers (38%), teaching reading skills (29%), and participating in a neighborhood crime prevention program (27%). Preferences differ markedly by gender. Young men are far more likely than young women to participate in a neighborhood crime program (36%, compared to 18%) and to help in environmental cleanup projects (24%, compared to 10%), while young women demonstrate a preference for working with children (48%, compared to 28%) and for spending time with seniors (29%, compared to 18%).

## Causes of Low Involvement

Time pressures dominate explanations of low involvement. What accounts for young people's lack of involvement in the community? We posed respondents this question, asking them to choose among seven possible explanations. The premier response, cited by 53%, is "There are too many other pressures on young people--like getting good grades or getting a good job." Younger respondents feel this pinch most acutely. Fifty-seven percent of the 15- to 18-year-olds say competing pressures is a strong reason for non-participation, while less than half (46%) of youth in the oldest age group say the same. Asked a similar question, two-thirds (67%) of social studies teachers agree that students face too many demands on their time.

"I don't have time to do everything," complains one 11th grader of his efforts to juggle school, part-time work, and other interests. "There's a great deal of pressure on your GPA [grade-point average]," says a 23-year-old Atlanta woman. These one-on-one interview respondents speak for most of their peers when they describe their sense of having or wanting to meet very high expectations, which are both internally and externally imposed.

# REASONS YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT MORE INVOLVED CITIZENS




Q.17 Youth/Q.13 Teachers

In the focus groups, teachers express sympathy with some of these pressures, but not others. Some young people, participants say, are dealing with a marginal family life, emotionally, economically, or both. "You know, you're talking about working, contributing to the world, valuing other people, and these people are totally involved in a struggle for survival every day," comments one teacher. Another sums up: "Kids today, some of them are really trying to cope, just to cope." Teachers also acknowledge that many students are under tremendous pressure to get good grades and to compete for graduate school acceptance and good jobs.

Other distractions strike teachers as less legitimate. Many students, focus group participants say, have jobs, not out of financial need, but in order to afford luxury items. "Our students in high school," observes one teacher, "go out and work. They work an enormous number of hours, and they always have to have their cars. They have to have whatever they want, and they will go out and earn the money." Another teacher remarks, "I don't believe that a student should have that much pressure on him during the time he is trying to accomplish something." Half of the surveyed young people work 20 hours or more a week.

A number of teachers in the focus groups, particularly in Kansas City, portray the current generation of high school students as more selfish and spoiled and less disciplined and responsible than past generations. One Kansas City man concludes, "My kids are going to look at [community involvement] and say, 'Well, that's not going to buy me a Gucci shirt, or that's not going to buy me a pair of Fila tennis shoes or something. What's in it for me?'" Today's students "want something for nothing," says another teacher. "Instant satisfaction," suggests another. One teacher, sounding a theme frequently raised by participants in both groups, lays

some of the blame for the present generation's tendency to seek tangible rewards on parents: "The children rule their parents. And I think this reverts back to the fact that both parents have to work to survive; and by having to work, they feel guilty about not spending more time with their children, so they just hand them everything that they ask for on a silver platter."

Some of the more involved face-to-face respondents are similarly hard on their peers. "Most of the people I know don't care," laments a young Atlanta woman. "They think, 'That's them, that's not me. That won't affect me and I will never have to deal with those kind of people or have to deal with the elderly or the handicapped or anything like that.'"

Young people and teachers also cite lack of parental encouragement as a major reason for youth non-involvement. A majority of 23- to 24-year-olds (52%) and 45% of young people overall consider this a strong reason. Teachers are especially harsh in their judgment of parents in this connection: 84% cite parental failure as a key factor in young people's lack of involvement.

"If parents don't have time to deal with the Girl Scouts or the heart campaign or politicking in the community or cleaning up their neighborhood, the kids won't," says one of the Kansas City focus group teachers. A Providence teacher believes that "the family isn't there as much as it used to be." "In some instances," says another, "you're telling the child to think about some other people, be considerate, be mannerable, when that's not the case; that's not being taught at home."

Other teachers portray parents in a somewhat more sympathetic light, citing the rise of two-earner families, single parent families, and teenage pregnancy as placing formidable time pressures on students' mothers and

fathers. "Some of my students have two kids already and they're 14," says a Kansas City teacher. "Their parents haven't finished school. How do you change a pattern like that?"

Third among the principal explanations offered for low participation in community affairs is that, too frequently, no one asks young people to do something. A majority of social studies teachers (56%) and 42% of young people rate as a strong reason the statement, "No one asks young people to get involved or shows them how they can."

Interpretation

> Perhaps committed youth come in two varieties: those who are so committed that they will seek out service opportunities, and those who might serve if opportunities come their way. In the gap between the good intentions expressed by a majority of young people and the good deeds reported by a minority may be substantial number of people in the second category. In other words, many young people seem willing to serve, but opportunities will have to come to them.

Teachers and young people differ over the culpability of schools in lack of community involvement. Only 28% of the teachers see schools as a major cause, while 43% of young respondents do.

A Closer Look at the Involved Minority

What can be said about the substantial minority of young people who have overcome various hurdles and become active members of their community? Knowing the answer to that question would obviously be valuable in designing efforts to encourage more widespread youth involvement. As we have noted, examination of the demographic characteristics of involved and non-involved youth does not reveal many promising correlations or suggestions for targeting. Examination of the more in-depth one-on-one

interviews provides only a partial elucidation of the question of what motivates and sustains involvement. Presented in Section VI of this report, that analysis relates a number of the key findings from the main survey to the more detailed reactions of some of the face-to-face survey respondents. As well, it presents six case studies drawn from the one-on-one interviews. Each of these profiled individuals stands out as particularly active or committed. By examining the outlook and attitudes of these exemplary young people, we may glean additional clues for encouraging others to follow suit.

Looking strictly at the survey results, we may draw some conclusions about those young people who have served the community in the past year. First, many who became involved did so through school and other mediating institutions or groups. Second, involved persons found their activity rewarding.

School is the single most frequently cited source of service opportunities among the volunteers, followed by friends and neighbors, churches, and youth clubs.

# INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY OR NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE (m)

| | |
|---|---|
| YES | 38% |
| Some Reasons For Involvement: | |
| Through My School | 8% |
| Through Friends | 6% |
| I Wanted To Help | 5% |
| Through My Church | 4% |
| NO | 62% |

Q.7a Youth

Interpretation

This finding--and similar observations among the the one-on-one interviews--reinforces the idea that schools in particular and mediating institutions in general will be key partners in any major effort to increase youth involvement. In addition, despite the current paucity of parentally initiated involvement, and despite teachers' and young people's criticisms that parents do not do enough to encourage community service by their children, students and teachers alike think it is parents, above all others, who would have the most influence on future participation.

However their involvement in a volunteer project began, active young people have good things to say about their experiences. Asked to respond to several descriptions that could apply to their feelings about volunteer work, they overwhelmingly prefer positive statements to negative ones. Thus, young people report that it felt good to help someone (57%) or to give something back to the community (47%), and that it was a good learning experience (40%). In comparison, just a handful of young people report that they did not like giving up free time (1%) or that they did not get anything out of their volunteer experience (2%).

# FEELINGS ABOUT VOLUNTEER WORK (m)

| | |
|---|---|
| Felt Good Helping Someone | 57% |
| Good Giving To Community | 47% |
| Good Learning Experience | 40% |
| Do Something With Friends | 5% |
| Did Not Get Anything Out Of It | 2% |
| Didn't Like Giving Up Free Time | 1% |

Q.7b Youth

One-on-one respondents who say they have done volunteer work in the past year were asked for their advice on how to encourage others their age to engage in similar activities:

> I would let them know the effects it had on me and how great it makes you feel.
>
> You never know when you are going to need help from someone.
>
> It's fun and it keeps you out of trouble.
>
> The most important thing about helping other people is that you can be proud about it. Everybody is going to need something to look back on and say, "I've done something. I've made someone happy."
>
> Giving can be as rewarding as receiving. There's going to be a time where we all need a friend, and now is the time we should be a friend to somebody else. If we don't become involved with those around us, we miss so much.
>
> Tell them it makes you feel good. You can have a good time, and you meet all these people who are glad and happy to be around you.
>
> It's a good learning experience. Helping others makes you feel better.
>
> You not only learn a lot, but you are receiving a lot, too, by being in contact.
>
> It makes you feel better about yourself by caring, by sharing, and by learning about other people.
>
> Because it makes you much happier helping out others. Maybe if they see you doing it--make it popular--they'll do it, too.
>
> Ask them to try the activity. Once they get involved, they won't want to stop.

## SECTION III

## ATTITUDES TOWARD THE POLITY AND THE NATION

Politics and national affairs are somewhat more remote from people's everyday consciousness than is the community. If the development of strong citizenship and participation skills is more abstract and problematic than encouraging community service, however, it is certainly no less important. The health of the nation depends in large part on an active and aware citizenry. This study probed deeply into young people's notions of what makes America special, what it means to be a good citizen, and what forms of national involvement they might be inclined to practice.

Young people understand only half the story of democracy. Although they appreciate the democratic freedoms that, in their eyes, make the country unique, they do so to the neglect of their responsibilities as citizens in a democracy. They agree overwhelmingly--either strongly (67%) or slightly (22%)--that "America is the best country in the world to live in." The explanation for this feeling emerges in the volunteered responses to the question about what makes America special, when young people offer variations on the theme of freedom and license that eclipse all other comments.

We asked respondents, "If someone from another country asked you to explain what makes America special, what would you tell them?" Almost all youth give answers relating to unique freedoms available to Americans (63%), freedom of speech or the press (23%), or freedom of choice (21%). By contrast, only 7% mention the fact that the United States is a democracy.

In the one-on-one interviews, respondents wax emphatic on this theme, as the following verbatim quotations reveal:

> Definitely freedom: compared to other countries, we can do so much. We can choose the job we want, the lifestyle you want, the religion you want--anything.

Freedom of speech, and the fact that you're not restricted to a certain class and you can move up.

Freedom. We aren't controlled by the media. Freedom to be what you want to be. There is not a set standard on what you have to grow up to be; it's up to us individually.

Opportunity to get an education, have a career or profession you want to.

Our freedom to do as we please, when we please.

The freedom we have to do what we want, within the law, and to say what we want. We have the right to make our own choices in what we want to do with our lives, not be told what we have to do.

The freedom of moving about; if you want to move, you can move. It's just really good.

Freedom would be number one. There's not too much political things going on now, where people are running around with machine guns like you see in the Middle East and stuff. You don't have to worry about police breaking in. It's more laid-back than in other countries.

The freedom to do anything you want in terms of fulfilling your dreams.

To be able to live your life the way you want.

Baseball, football with gear, wide open spaces. Europe seems so congested. In Russia, you can't go state-to-state like here.

You can say what you feel and you don't have to worry about somebody telling you what to do and when to do it. People respect you.

Freedom. I'd like to show them a rock concert.

Individualism, and the fact that it is a democracy and you can do whatever you want.

You're free to do whatever you want, as long as it doesn't hurt anyone else.

You'd have a good life; it's free. [In] a lot of other countries, you can't go out in the street. The government's harder on them.

> Because you can do whatever you want to do, be whatever you want to be--like the American dream.
>
> Democracy and rock and roll.
>
> We can make our own decisions. We have rights. We're innocent until proven guilty. We have the freedom we deserve. Another trademark that makes America what it is is the Statue of Liberty. I feel that's the sign of freedom for us all. I feel good every time I see it.
>
> [The fact that we are] one of the strongest countries, economically and militarily. We have maintained the Constitution without domestic violence.
>
> That we really don't have any limits.
>
> The free government: you can vote for who you want. Sometimes it doesn't work out, but it usually will.
>
> That we are world-renowned leaders. We have a lot of power and influence.
>
> The principles that our founding fathers established America with, like a high ideal of freedom for everyone.

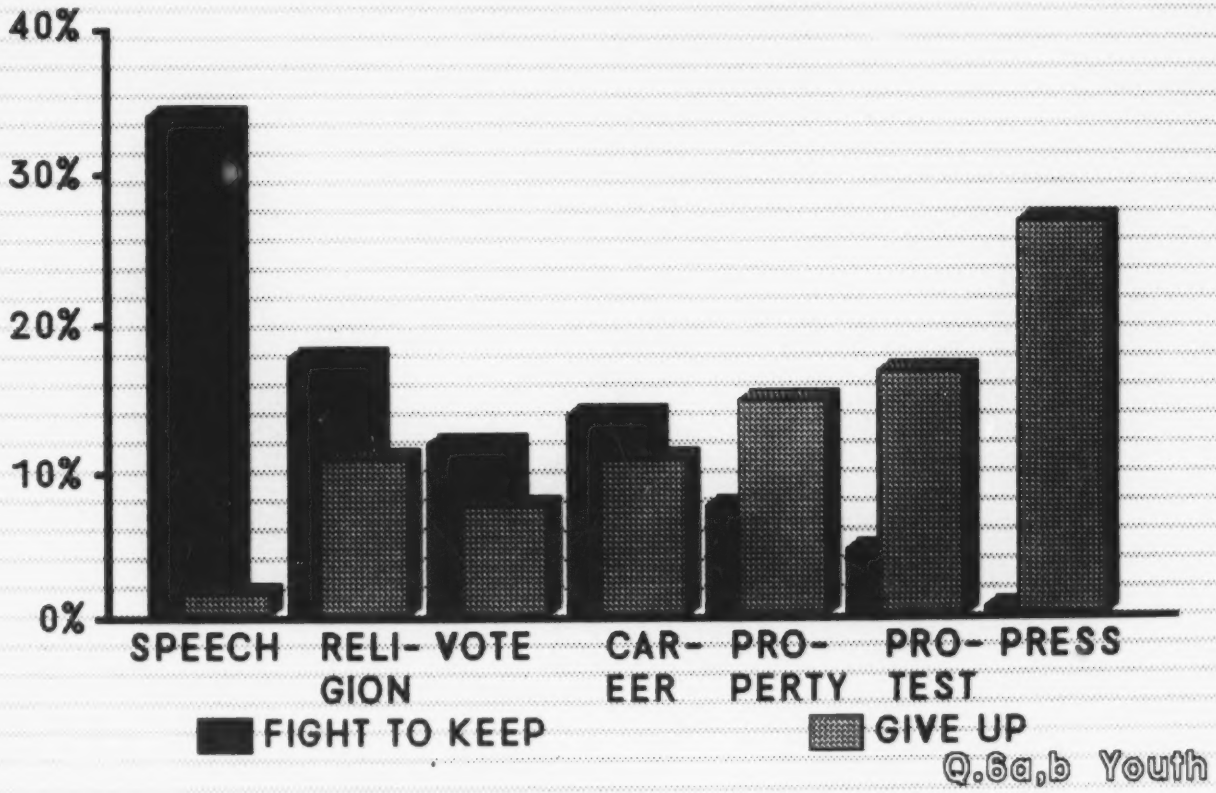
In addition to these myriad freedoms--some constitutionally framed and some personally interpreted--many young people also characterize the nation in pluralistic terms. They appreciate the ethnic diversity, the variety of cultures, and the differences in attitudinal and political orientation that flourish under American democracy:

> You have the ability to be in contact with different races and cultures.
>
> We're a mixture of all ethnic groups.
>
> We have some nice people in the world who make it special: different people who come from other countries to make it beautiful.
>
> You have a lot of organizations working together for different things: peace, the elderly, the handicapped.
>
> America is where all races live. Tell them you could find a lot of jobs, if you have experience, and America is beautiful.

> America is so diverse. You can go to New York City and end up in Chinatown. It's just nice to see so many different people working together with so many different backgrounds.
>
> About the only nation that has so many different cultures blended together. You have so much input, different views. It makes people understand everyone in the world better.

The emphasis on personal rights and freedoms as the defining quality of the nation comes at the expense of such collective qualities as democracy, political dissent, and equality of opportunity. This bias is revealed further in a survey question that asks which among a list of rights and freedoms young people would fight hardest to protect. A follow-up question asks which items from the list they would most willingly surrender. Among the most cherished are freedom of speech (34% would fight to keep it), freedom of religion (18%), and the right to choose one's own career (14%). Among the rights young people would jettison first are freedom of the press (27%), the right to protest (17%), and the right to own private property (15%). The right to vote, perhaps most fundamental of all liberties in a democracy, falls in the middle: 12% would fight hardest to protect it, but 8% would give it up first.

# RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS FIGHT TO KEEP OR GIVE UP



Interpretation

The paradox of freedom of speech as the most cherished right and freedom of the press as the most expendable raises a very important question about young people's understanding of free speech. In these results, we see again evidence that today's youth have grasped only half the story, that the connection between personal license and societal freedoms is missing in young Americans' perspective on democracy. While liberty and license are common preoccupations among adolescents, and while it could be argued that the focus on personal rights in the context of America is developmentally appropriate, we may wonder when to expect that youth will apprehend the responsibility half of the equation. If, as young people report, their parents are the key source of their civic values, what other forces, if any, will come into play to complete the job of political socialization? The results from this study make clear the necessity for concerted efforts--enlisting the active engagement of parents, educators, and administrators--to teach young people not only about their rights and opportunities, but about their obligations as citizens, as well.

Young people have a similarly incomplete sense of what it means to be a good citizen, emphasizing personal decency and generosity over engagement in politics or national affairs. Most young people agree either strongly (49%) or slightly (33%) that Americans owe something to their country. Similarly, most reject the assertion, either strongly (43%) or slightly (28%), that "the only responsibilities of being a good citizen are paying your taxes and obeying the law." Self-described liberals and youth with three or more years of college are particularly likely to reject this limited formulation of citizenship.

The survey probed for young people's answer to the question of what constitutes good citizenship in a variety of ways. In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to describe a good citizen, using their own words. Above all, the ideal citizen is portrayed as someone who helps

people in need and is generous and caring (43%), someone who helps and cares about the community (33%), and someone who obeys the law (33%).

This equation of good citizen with good person prevails among the one-on-one respondents as well:

> Being the best of friends to someone, telling the truth, not stealing from each other.
>
> To help people in need, being nice, just helping your fellow man.
>
> To respect the laws of the state and country, to be a caring citizen involved in all aspects of state and local ideas. Be considerate of other people.
>
> It means the same to me as being a good Christian.
>
> Do unto others what you'd like done unto you. Respect personal freedom.
>
> Stay out of everybody's way; help those that ask for it and deserve it, but don't poke your nose where it doesn't belong.
>
> Not litter on the road. If you went to another country, you wouldn't make America look bad--like dress all scummy and talk like a hick.
>
> Graduate from high school, get a nice paying job, maybe go to college or take up a few classes, and be involved in sports.
>
> Not so much selfishness. They should be helpful to each other. You watch from the window and call the police, but that's about it.
>
> To protect other people's rights and be aware of what's happening in the country.
>
> Help the elderly across the street--elderly in general, I guess. Listen to them. Don't promote drugs or violence.
>
> To help others and to have spirit in what the government is doing.
>
> Get through life, pay taxes. You don't have to be in politics.
>
> Nice person, hard worker.

Honest, good friend, trustworthy.

An ideal citizen would be a volunteer somewhere.

Let a person cross in front of a car, even if they didn't have the right of way. Would return a lost wallet.

Don't throw your trash on the highway.

Sweeping around the outside of their house and saying "hello" to neighbors.

Helps the hungry, sticks up for someone, tells you the truth.

One who respects the president of the United States, respects the flag and respects the people of the country.

Only a small minority of survey respondents volunteer political participation as the defining character of a good citizen. "No one's political anymore, it seems. Like I said, the civil rights thing is so abstract," says a 23-year-old one-on-one respondent. Twelve percent of all youth mention voting and 9% mention keeping abreast of or involved in national issues. The following quotations from the face-to-face interviews represent some of the comments that do emphasize engagement in the political process as an aspect of American citizenship:

To keep up on what's happening in the political world, to vote, to participate. If we don't participate with getting things done and making things better, then nobody will. We can't wait for the next guy to change things.

Taking an active role in the American process.

Obey the law, concerned with your neighbors, volunteering to help the poor, getting involved in community efforts.

He would vote and get involved.

A good citizen participates in government.

> Someone who votes and knows what they're voting about.
>
> Hardworking, honest, votes, willing to help the government--whether it be literacy campaign, drug campaign, or preserving natural resources.
>
> Paying taxes on time, voting for the right president. Someone who works to make the system better.
>
> He gets involved; he would be a voter.
>
> Willing to put his country before a lot of things. Looks at the nation as a whole, instead of for his or her own rights.
>
> A good citizen votes. It's a right and responsibility that I firmly believe in.

Young people's definition of citizenship contrasts sharply with that of social studies teachers. Posed a similar open-ended question, 47% of teachers volunteer voting as the defining characteristic of a good citizen. Other frequently named qualities include adherence to the law (27%), involvement in national issues (26%), awareness of national issues (26%), concern for the community (25%), and caring about one's fellow man (24%).

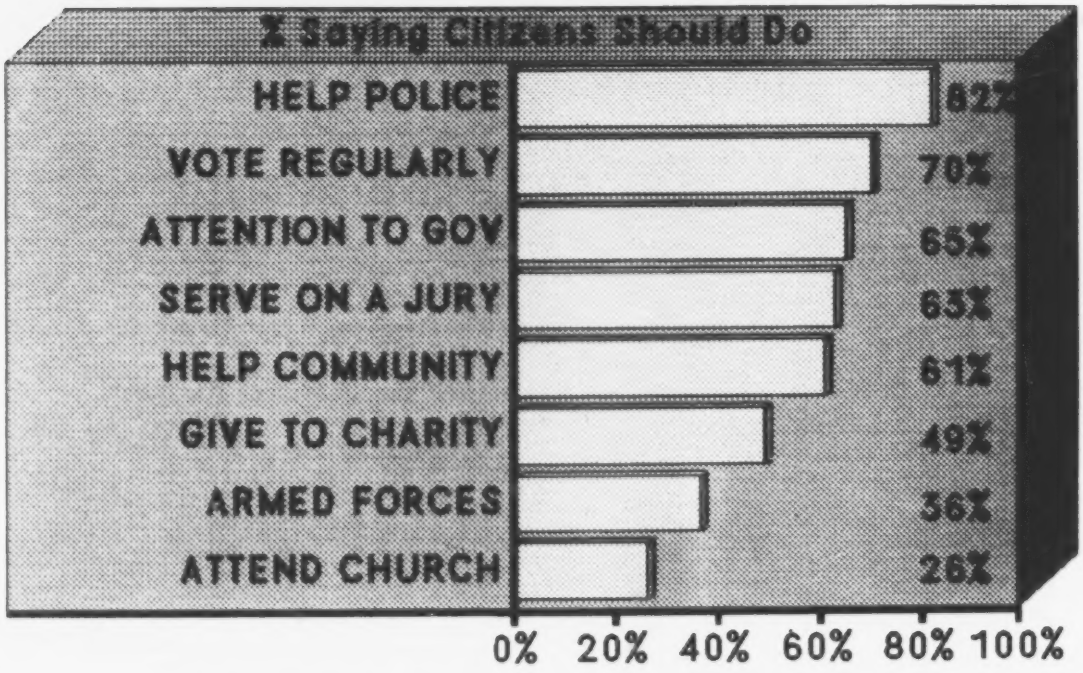
# VOLUNTEERED DESCRIPTION OF A GOOD CITIZEN

| | TCHRS. | YOUTH |
|---|---|---|
| Votes | 47% | 12% |
| Law Abiding | 27% | 33% |
| Cares About Community | 25% | 33% |
| Knowledgeable | 26% | 33% |
| Caring | 24% | 43% |
| Patriotic | 14% | 14% |
| Good Morals, Honest | 10% | 2% |

Q.5a Youth/Q.2 Teachers

Surveyed young people were also read a list of acts ranging from voting to giving money to charity and asked whether each is an essential part of being a good citizen. Majorities identify assisting the police (82%), voting regularly (70%), paying attention to national affairs (65%), serving on a jury (63%), and performing community service (61%) as essential to good citizenship.

# OPINIONS OF WHAT ALL CITIZENS SHOULD DO




Q.14 Youth

Interpretation

The reactions to these closed-ended questions suggest that many young people have heard the message about what citizenship should be all about, but the volunteered responses suggest they have not yet taken that message to heart. As we will discuss, there is some evidence that, at least with regard to voting, some young people have heard the message and rejected it.

Examining responses to this list of acts among subgroups reveals an interesting pattern with regard to respondents who have had at least three years of college. By statistically significant margins, college-educated respondents are more likely to define citizenship in terms of national affairs, as opposed to the more amorphous concept implicit in the full sample's responses. For instance, while 70% of young people overall identify voting as essential, 80% of college-educated young people do so. Similarly, 73% of college-educated youth say all citizens should keep up with government affairs, as opposed to 65% of the full sample. By comparable margins, these individuals are less likely than are all respondents to say good citizenship requires contributing to charity or doing volunteer work in the community. Upper white collar respondents exhibit a similar though less pronounced pattern.

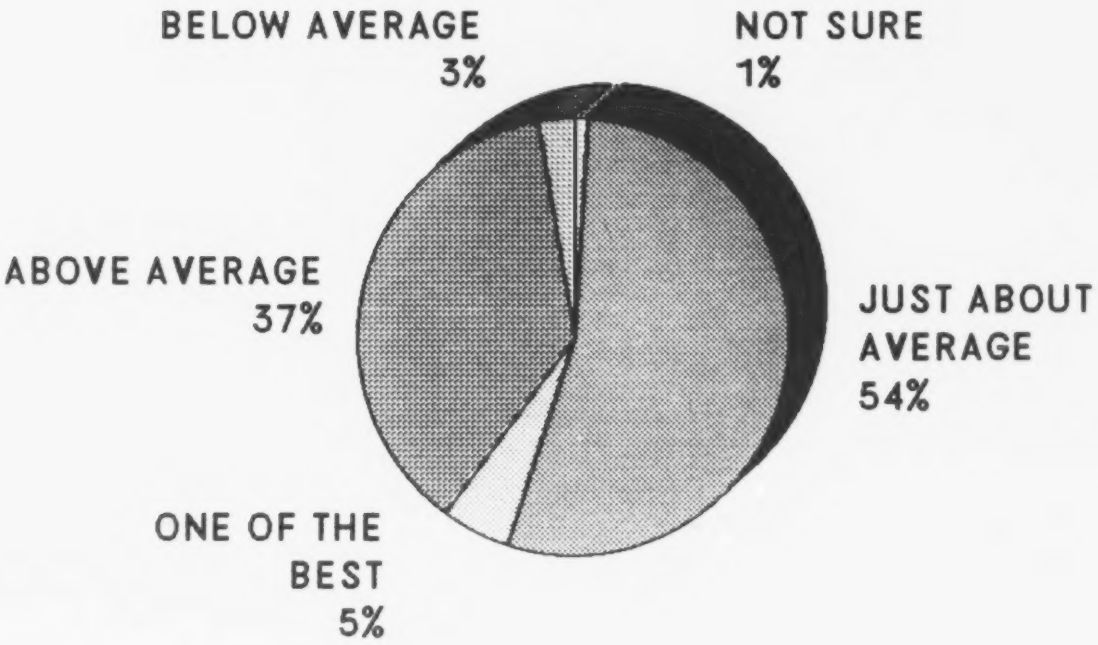
Interpretation

Although young respondents' characterization of good citizens as volunteers in their community or contributors to charity reflects a spirit of generosity, we are concerned that youth do not perceive fully the difference between the demands and obligations of citizenship in a democracy and the more universal requirements of human decency. In failing to distinguish between these sometimes overlapping but often discrete forms of responsibility, young people may be giving their democratic duties short shrift.

However they characterize their citizenship obligation, young people are satisfied that they discharge it as well as the average person. Survey respondents were asked, "When it comes to being a good citizen, compared to most people you know, would you say you are one of the best, above average, just about average, or below average?" Most (54%) consider themselves average, while a significant minority (37%) consider themselves above average. A 50% plurality of those with three years of college or more rate themselves as above average, as do narrow pluralities of those from upper income white collar families and college students from higher socioeconomic level families. Conversely, lower income respondents are more likely to rate themselves as average citizens.

# HOW GOOD A CITIZEN ARE YOU?

## COMPARED TO MOST PEOPLE

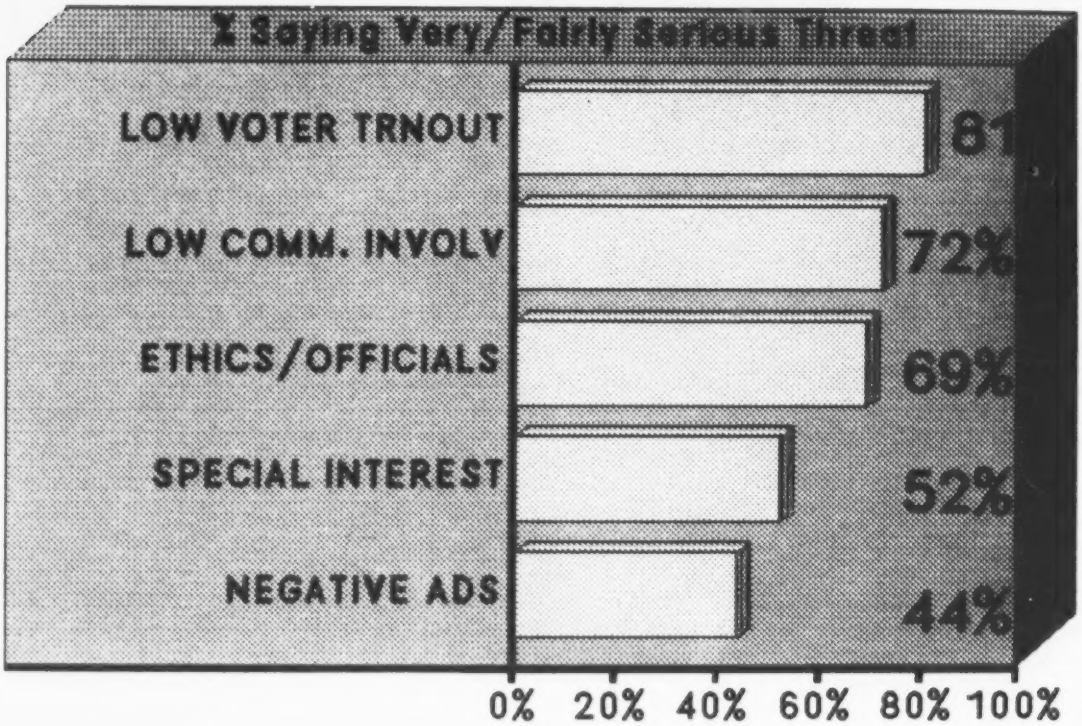



Q.5b Youth

Most young people shun national affairs and show little inclination to get involved in politics or government. In general, youth show little interest in these issues, display cynicism toward public officials, and appear to honor only in the breach their obligation to vote. The good feelings young people express toward the nation as a whole and their abstract sense of responsibility as citizens in most cases do not translate into a willingness to participate in the political process.

By social studies teachers' lights, this is a disturbing problem. Asked to evaluate the seriousness of different threats to American democracy, a large majority rank low voter turnout and involvement in the political process at the top, considering it a very serious (62%) or fairly serious (19%) threat. A low level of involvement in community and civic activities is also cited as a very (40%) or fairly (32%) serious threat to democracy. According to their standards of citizenship, a significant number of social studies teachers see current students as less likely to become good citizens than were students a decade ago. While 46% of surveyed teachers think today's students are about the same on this measure, 37% look more dimly than favorably at the current generation.

# CONCERN ABOUT POTENTIAL THREAT TO DEMOCRACY




Q.3 Teachers

Young people are not interested in politics or public affairs. By 57% to 42%, surveyed youth report just some (39%) or very little (18%) interest in reading or hearing about politics or government, as opposed to a great deal (16%) or quite a bit (26%). Young people age 23 to 24 are noticeably more interested in public affairs than are their younger counterparts: 49% register a great deal or quite a bit of interest, compared to 37% of respondents age 15 to 18. Interest in politics runs particularly high among respondents with three years or more of college (65%), college students from upper socioeconomic status families (60%), and voters (55%).

Social studies teachers agree that political passions run weak in high school students, and say this phenomenon is more pronounced today than in past years. By 45% to 21%, teachers see today's high school students as less interested in politics and public affairs than their counterparts were a decade ago. "A very small percentage of them care and a very small percentage are interested," says one of the focus group participants. "The others think it is boring, boring, boring." Another agrees: "The kids today are really not environmentally aware, socially aware. You have to draw that to their attention."

Interpretation

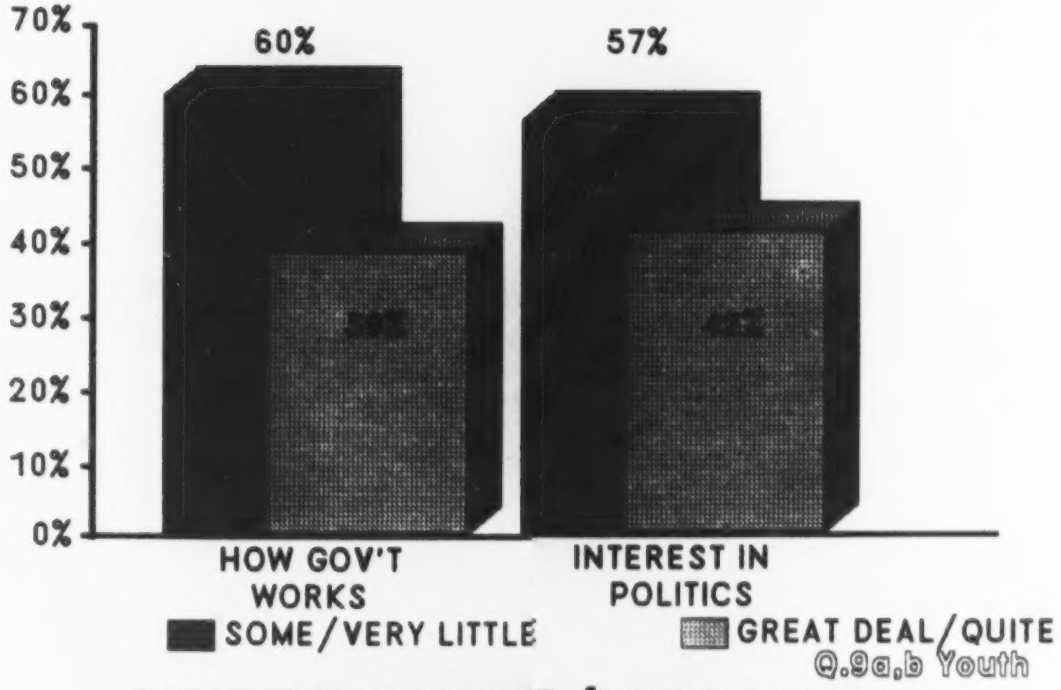
The statistically significant rise in political interest with age offers some evidence for the theory that political interest is a developmental phenomenon, something that people "grow into." Even more striking is the emerging correlation between advanced education and political consciousness.

Most young people claim to have a level of understanding of politics and government commensurate with their low interest. While two-thirds (68%) of all young people know their governor's name and nearly all (95%) know the

president's term of office, most, when asked directly, say they know either just some (39%) or very little (21%) about the way government works. At least with regard to high school students, teachers imply this is more than false modesty. A 37% plurality of teachers think today's students know less about politics and public affairs than did students a decade ago.

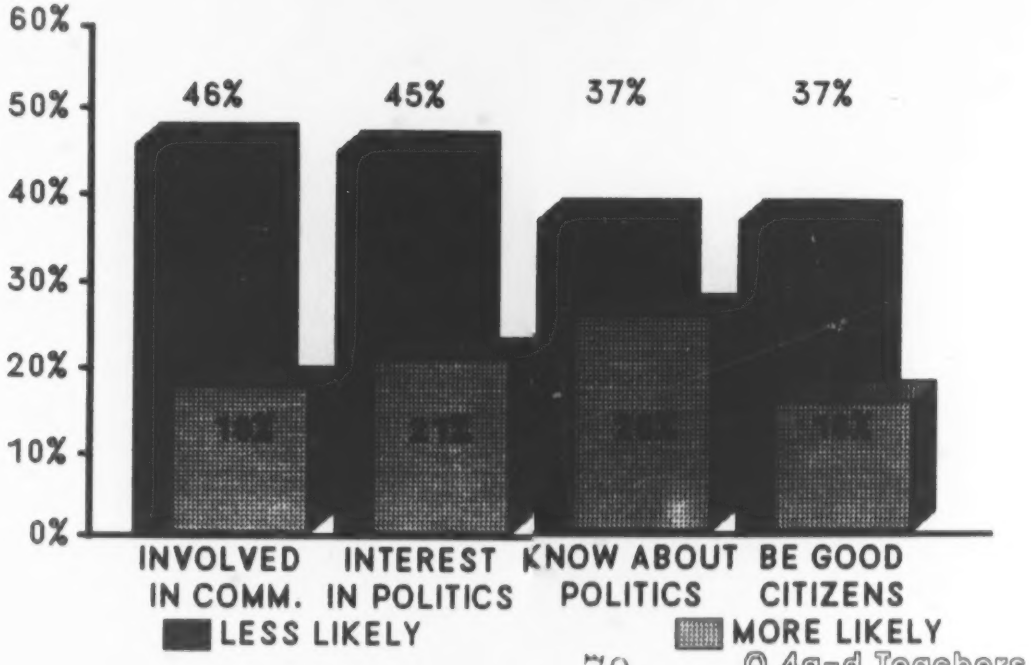
Surveyed young people concede periodic bafflement by national affairs. More than two-thirds agree strongly (34%) or slightly (36%) with the statement, "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on." Even a majority (59%) of those in the politically astute group with three or more years of college admit to being confused at times.

# KNOWLEDGE/INTEREST IN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS




Q.9a,b Youth

# STUDENTS MORE/LESS LIKELY TO DO ITEMS THAN 10 YRS. AGO

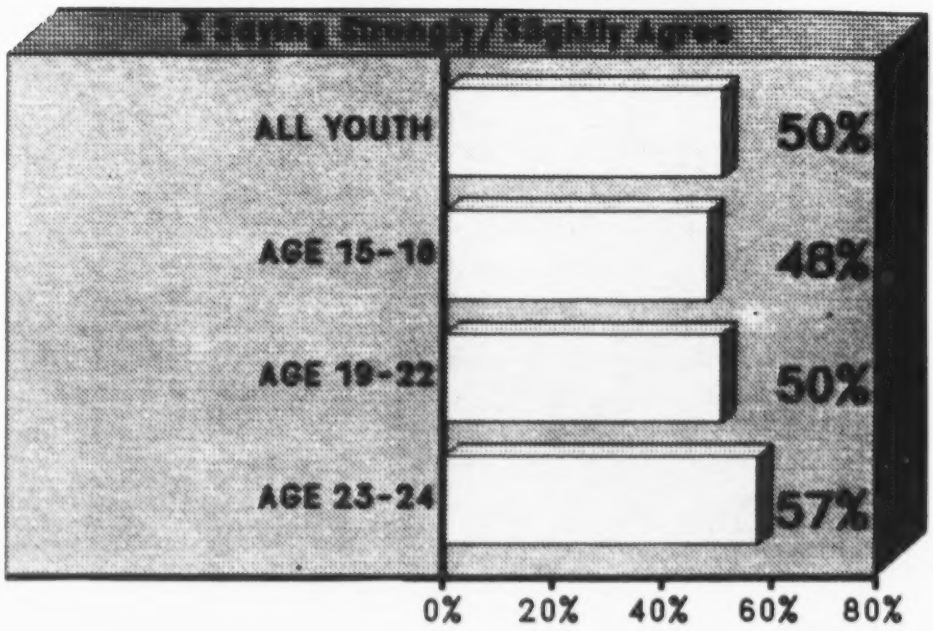



Q.4a-d Teachers

Young people are distrustful of government in general and national leaders in particular. By 50% to 46%, they agree either strongly (19%) or slightly (31%) with the proposition that "government officials don't care much about what average people think." Lack of trust runs especially high among blacks (66%) and high school graduates who did not go on to college (64%). Distrust rises with age: 57% of respondents age 23 to 24 agree with the statement, compared to 48% of those age 15 to 18. Groups most likely to disagree--that is, who believe public officials are attuned to public concerns--include people with three or more years of college (56% disagree) and college students of both upper and lower socioeconomic backgrounds (54%).

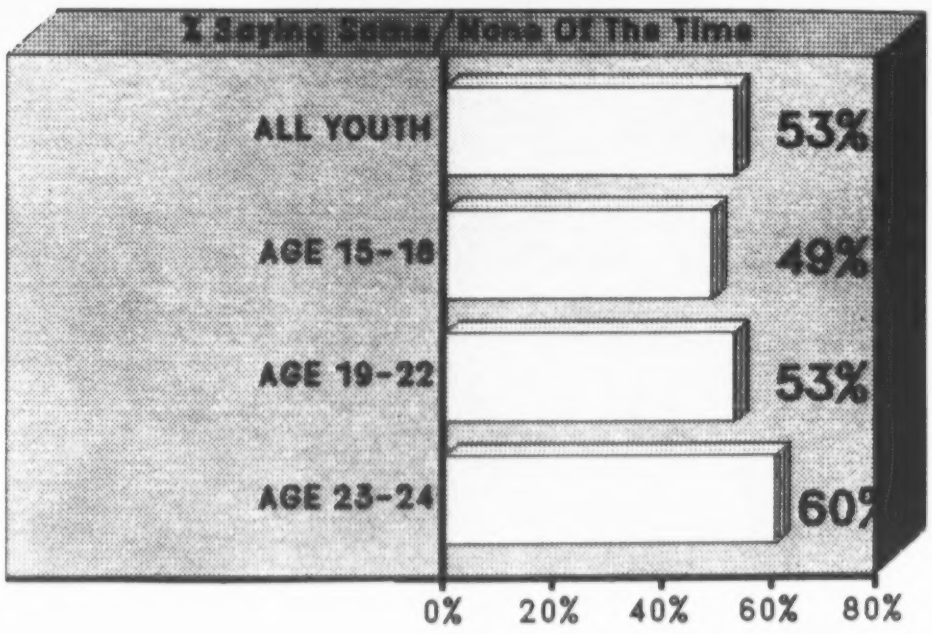
Asked a similar question focusing on the federal government, most young people (53%) think they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right only some or none of the time. A substantial 46%, however, trust Washington most or all of the time. Blacks, Hispanics, lower income youth, and residents of the west are most skeptical of federal authority; in each of these subgroups, 60% or more say Washington rarely or never does the right thing. As is the case regarding public officials in general, young people appear to grow more cynical about the federal government as they grow older. The proportion of people who say Washington does the right thing most or all of the time drops from 50% among respondents age 15 to 18 to 39% among 23- to 24-year-olds.

# GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DON'T CARE ABOUT AVERAGE PERSON




Q.12 Youth

# CAN WASHINGTON BE TRUSTED TO DO RIGHT?






Q.13 Youth

Interpretation

The apparent disillusionment that occurs as these individuals get older is disturbing. We suspect, however, that this declining trust in government becomes even more pronounced in later adulthood. More important than young people's cynicism is our finding that these youth simply do not perceive themselves as participants in the political system.

Disaffection and lack of interest in politics and national affairs translate predictably into a low level of political involvement. As we have noted, most young people, good intentions notwithstanding, do not volunteer their time to the community. With regard to politics and public affairs, even the good intentions are mostly absent; hence, actual involvement is correspondingly much lower.

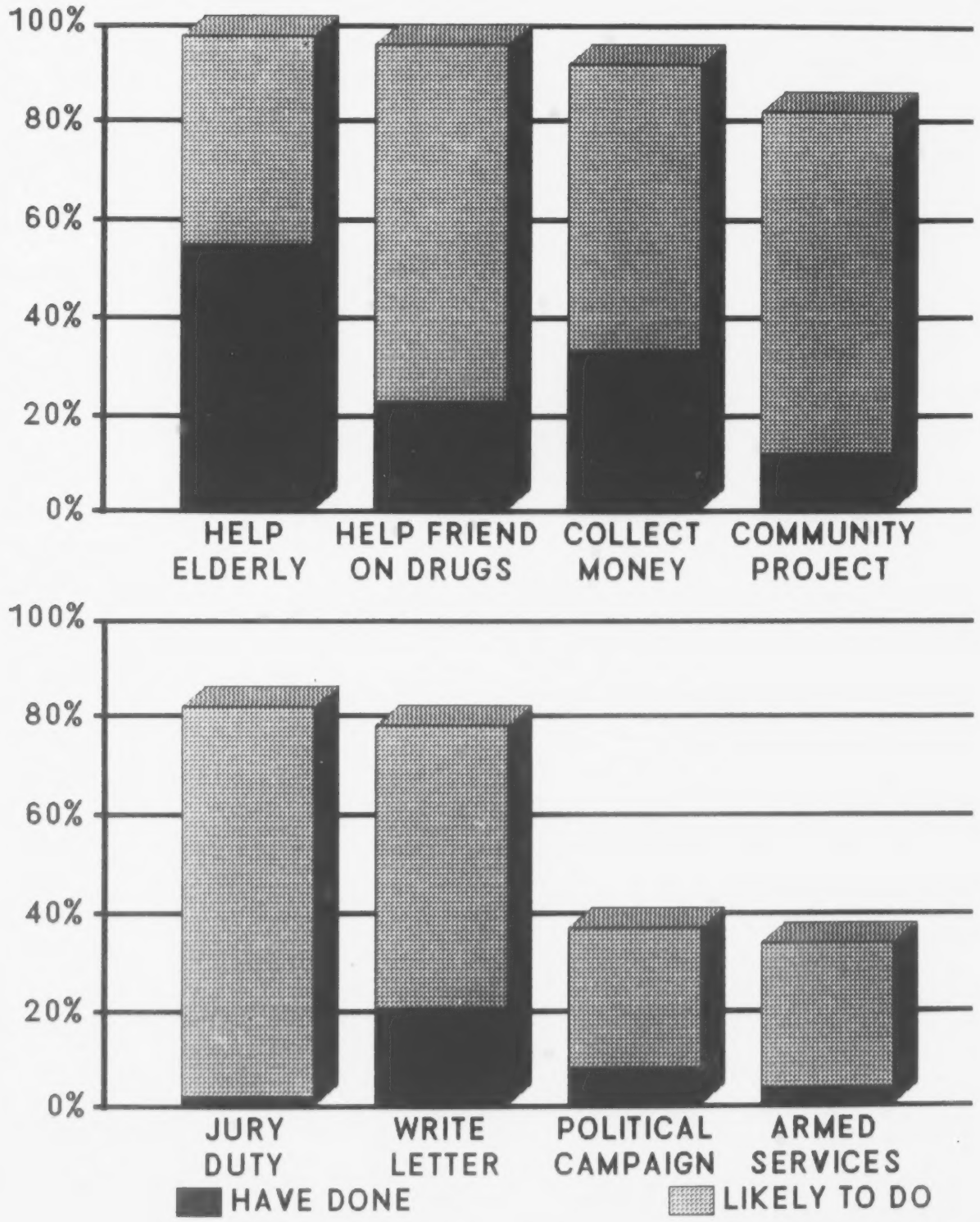
It is worth noting at the outset that most young people have a fair degree of confidence in the efficacy of political participation. A 57% majority say that an individual can make a great deal (25%) or quite a bit (32%) of difference in helping to reduce some of the problems facing the country today. Just 15% say one person makes very little difference. Along similar lines, a 62% majority of young people reject as a legitimate reason for non-participation the assertion that "things are so complicated and the problems facing the country are so big that it doesn't seem that one person's involvement would matter that much." The sense of political potency declines slightly with age: while 64% of respondents in the youngest age group say they could make at least quite a bit of difference, only 53% of the oldest respondents feel that way.

Young people prefer to get involved in activities that have an impact close to home, and generally eschew involvement that is primarily political. Among various forms of participation, surveyed young people say

they are much more likely to become involved in such community-oriented activities as helping an elderly neighbor or offering an hour a week on a local project than to work on a political campaign or write to an elected official. Teachers in the focus group sessions confirm this finding. While citing numerous community projects ranging from service clubs to charity drives, they offer almost no evidence of any political activity by any of their students.

Campaign work is a case in point. Only 8% of the surveyed young people claim to have done campaign work. Those with three or more years of college and college students from upper socioeconomic status families are more likely than average to have worked on a campaign. Only the young people who place a high value on community involvement as a life goal are significantly more likely than youth overall to say they intend to work on a campaign in the future. Intention to do campaign work, moreover, drops sharply with age--from 35% of respondents age 15 to 18 to 24% of respondents age 19 to 24.

# LIKELY OR UNLIKELY TO DO SELECTED ACTIVITIES




91

Q.8 Youth

Youth place a relatively low value on voting as a defining aspect of good citizenship. Given their admitted lack of interest in politics, young people's responses to the issue of electoral participation would lead us to expect infrequent voting by most young Americans.

Attitudes toward voting, however, are complicated. Findings from some of the survey questions suggest a widespread sense of obligation to vote. A large majority of respondents (78%), for instance, reject the statement, "So many people vote in the national election that it doesn't matter much whether I vote or not." Also, 70% agree that voting is something all citizens should do. A huge majority (87%) of 15- to 17-year-olds say they are almost certain or very likely to register and vote in the first election after they turn 18.

On the other hand, there is a wealth of data to show that voter turnout among young people is relatively quite low. And if their older counterparts can be used to predict, many of these youth currently under voting age will not act on their stated intentions. Only 59% of the 23- to 24-year-olds in the survey claim to have registered and voted in 1988, and those claims may be overstated. In fact, among respondents of eligible age who are not yet registered or did not vote in the last presidential election, the expressed intention to register and vote in the next election decreases dramatically with age: whereas 90% of 18-year-olds in this group say they are almost certain or very likely to register and vote at the next opportunity, less than half (49%) the 23- to 24-year-olds indicate they will do so. Furthermore, 36% of respondents age 23 to 24 say that one can be a good citizen even without voting regularly, compared to only 26% of 15- to 18-year-olds who feel that way.

The focus group discussions suggest that teachers may be sending their students mixed signals about voting. Some participants argue that voting is not as important as other forms of civic contribution. A consensus formed in Kansas City around the notion that uninformed voting is worse than not voting at all. Teachers in that group were asked what they would think if 80% of their students went out and voted in the next election. "I would be worried if I thought that they would vote," responds one teacher. "It would scare me very seriously," says another. This sentiment arose in the Providence session as well. "Let's just hope the informed ones are the only ones who go vote." Another adds, "Voting is very important, but just going into that voting booth is meaningless unless you have taken the time to inform yourself about the candidates and the issues."

Students appear to have absorbed this message. Almost two-thirds of surveyed young people agree either strongly (42%) or slightly (21%) with the statement, "If a person doesn't care how an election comes out, that person shouldn't vote in it."

Another item that scores very low in likelihood among the list of various forms of service to community or nation is military service. Just one-third of all youth say they either are likely to join the military (29%) or have already done so (4%). However, about the same proportion agree strongly with the proposition, "I'd be willing to volunteer for military service if the President said there was a national emergency." Another 28% agree slightly, bringing the total to 61%.

Young men are much more likely than young women to say they would heed the call to arms: 74% of males agree strongly or slightly that they would perform military service during a national emergency, compared to 50% of females. Also more likely to say they would serve are respondents who

place a high value on community involvement and those with a high interest in politics and government.

As is the case with community service, we find a solid core of politically committed and active young people. While the preponderance of young people are uninterested, mildly cynical, and unlikely to participate in politics or national affairs, a significant number are just the opposite: interested, committed, and inclined to get involved. Half of all respondents (49%) say being a good American who cares about the good of the country is a highly important life goal. One-fourth (25%) are both very interested and very knowledgeable about government and politics. More than one-third (36%) either intend to work on a political campaign or already have. One in five (20%) have written to an elected official or newspaper on a public issue.

# SECTION IV

# THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN FORMING CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY VALUES

Schools play a critical role in the formation and practice of positive civic and community values through their social studies curriculum, by sponsoring or supporting extracurricular activities, and by conducting such in-school activities as voter registration drives. This section of the report looks at the role of schools through the eyes of young people and social studies teachers.

## Youth, Civic Values, and School

After their parents, young people see teachers as the next most important source of guidance on their thinking about citizenship and civic values. Although parents (70%) are seen by far as having the greatest influence on young Americans' notions of good citizenship, teachers have the second greatest impact, mentioned by 21% of respondents. Friends come in third, with 12%.

### Interpretation

> While teachers are nowhere close to parents in prospective influence, their relative influence is significant. In addition to commanding respect on these issues, teachers have the ability to dispense knowledge, and in many cases, to marshal opportunities for young people to put their civic values to practical use. In addition, given their own high (as self-reported) rate of community and political involvement, teachers are, at least potentially, good role models. In short, teachers may not be able to shape values as readily as parents can, but they may be uniquely situated to influence how young people put those values into practice.

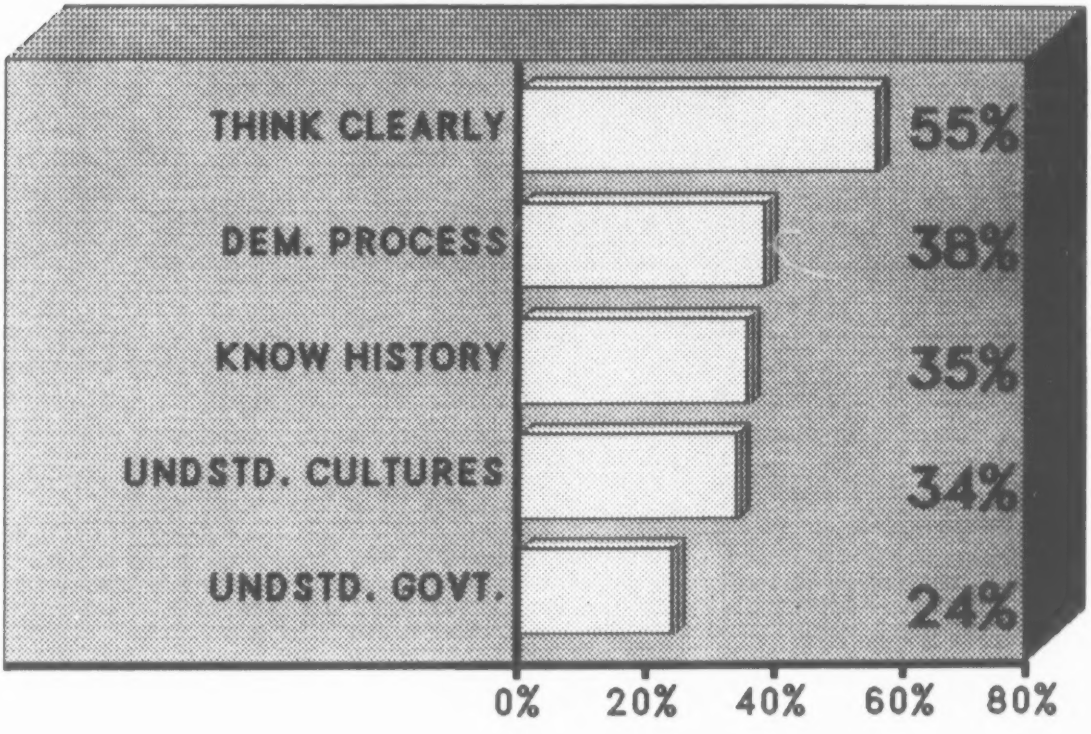
Students give civics classes a passing grade. Most young people (75%) report having had courses in high school that deal with government and citizenship. In general, 71% of that group say they found these courses either very or pretty interesting, and most (56%) found them about as

interesting as anything else they have taken in school. As well, most (75%) report having learned a lot or a fair amount about government and citizenship from their courses. On the ultimate question of whether schools succeed in promoting civic involvement, a 49% to 43% plurality reject the notion that the schools do not do a very good job of teaching young people how to be good citizens.

Social Studies Teachers, Civic Values, and School

Social studies teachers say they place a relatively high value on promoting good citizenship and participation skills, and in general, think they succeed in doing so. Given a list of possible goals they might have for students, teachers rank promoting an interest in participating in the democratic process second only to developing the ability to think clearly as a key objective. Teachers put this ahead of such other goals as a knowledge of history, an understanding of other cultures, and an understanding of government. When asked directly how promoting citizenship ranks against other goals they have, 83% characterize it as either the most important (24%) or one of the most important (59%) aims. On the other hand, when civic participation is not a specifically named choice, it seems less likely to be at the forefront of teachers' objectives. Only one participant in either focus group raised citizenship and participation when asked about their goals as social studies teachers.

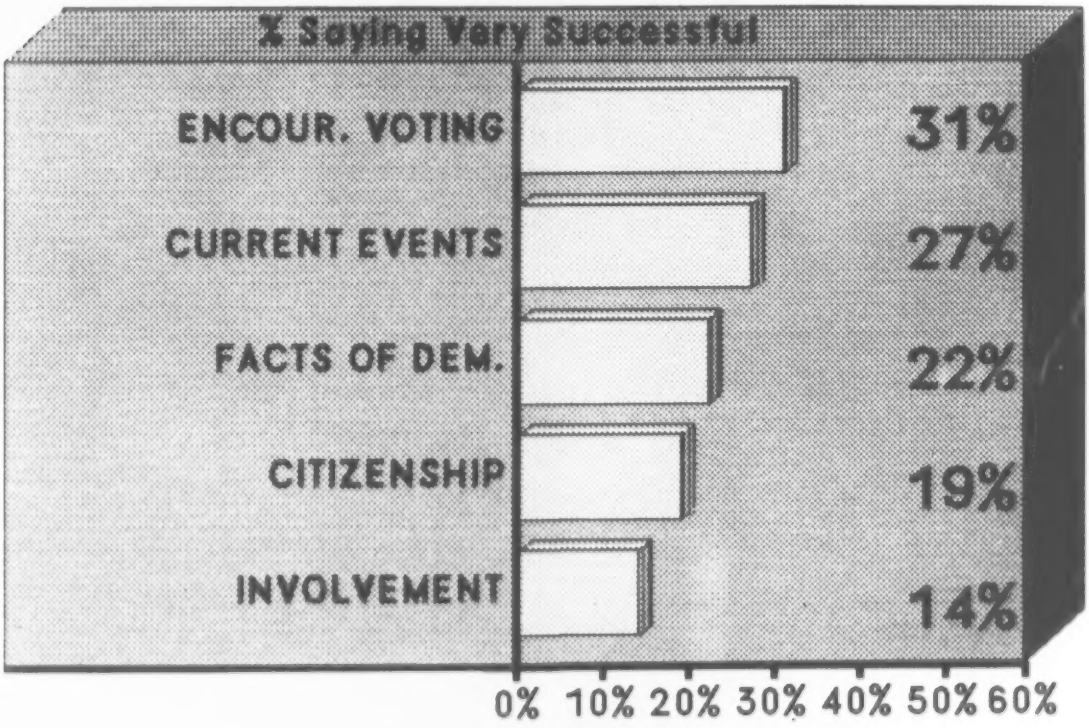
# GOALS TEACHERS HAVE FOR STUDENTS (m)




Q.7a Teachers

In general, most teachers think they succeed at this task. Two-thirds of surveyed teachers say they are either very (31%) or fairly (35%) successful at encouraging students to vote and participate in politics as adults. Of five selected goals, encouraging participation ranks first among those that teachers feel they are very successful at achieving.

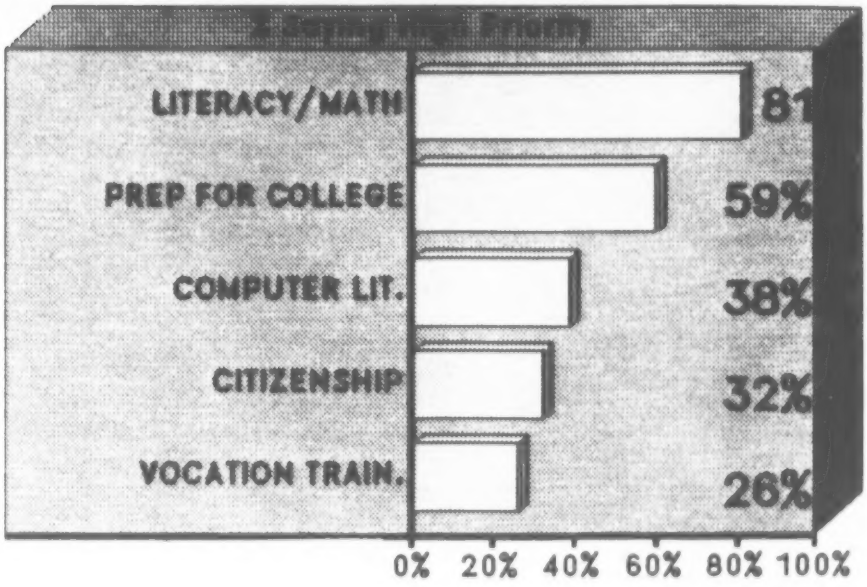
# HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE SCHOOLS IN ACHIEVING SELECTED GOALS?




Q.9 Teachers

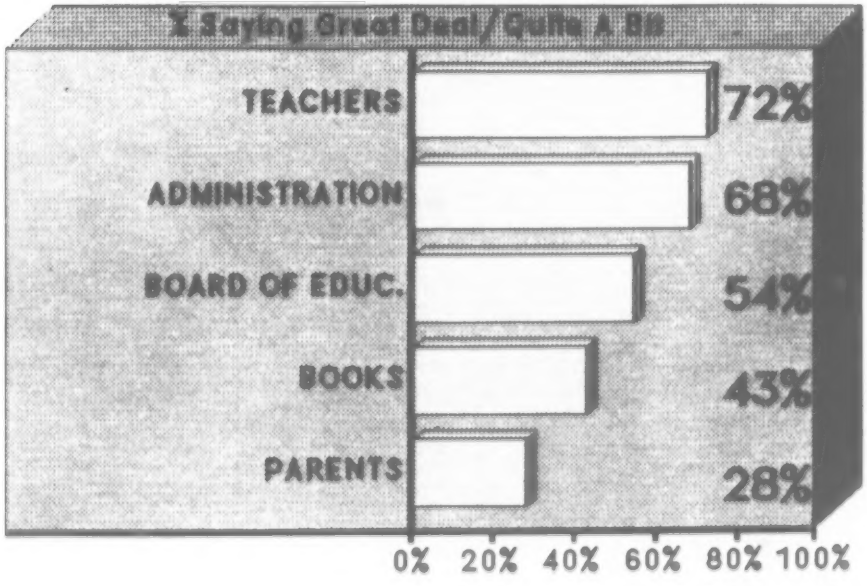
Social studies teachers see others within the education system as less committed to promoting citizenship and participation skills. While they greatly value inculcating citizenship skills and are proud of succeeding, teachers believe this goal takes a back seat among principals, administrators, textbook publishers, and others in the education system. Surveyed teachers say preparation for citizenship ranks behind other goals their school might have for all of its students, including basic literacy and math skills, preparation for college, and computer literacy. Teachers were also asked to assess how much various actors in the system care about trying to help young people become good citizens. While 72% say teachers themselves care a great deal or quite a bit, progressively fewer say the same of administrators in their school (68%), Board of Education members (54%), social studies textbook authors (43%) and parents (28%).

# IMPORTANCE OF SELECTED EDUCATIONAL GOALS




Q.6 Teachers

# DEGREE GROUPS CARE ABOUT CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION




Q.8 Teachers

Students and their parents top teachers' list of obstacles to more effective citizenship education. Teachers, by and large, see students and parents as unwilling partners in the effort to forge good citizens out of 15- to 18-year-olds. As we have indicated, teachers believe parents, of all players in the education system, are the least concerned about promoting citizenship and political participation and are the key cause of low participation by their children.

The students themselves come in at times for no less harsh judgments. Asked to choose from a list of possible frustrations they face as social studies teachers, 63% cite lack of student interest--more than choose any other response. The second most frequent answer, that the topic is inherently not interesting, is mentioned by only 25% of teachers.

"They're there because they have to be there, and they really don't want to be," concludes a Kansas City teacher. "I do everything but dance on the desk to get their attention, and it's because of the Sesame Street syndrome: they want instant everything," complains a participant in Providence.

### Interpretation

> Enlistment of teachers as partners in new initiatives to promote political and civic participation will have to build not only on their ability to influence young people, but on their pride in considering participation an important goal and their sense of success in fostering it. These efforts may also have to take into account the perceived indifference of other actors in the education system, as well as the sometimes caustic attitude with which a significant number of teachers regard students and their parents.

Some of the focus group participants cite sociological and demographic change as limiting factors on schools' ability to promote community

involvement. One Kansas City teacher argues that the challenge is compounded by the increasingly tenuous connection between schools and communities: "Now we're looking at a mobile family, so if you're talking about a mobile community, we don't have that any more; and when you talk about community involvement and what you do centered around the school, this is not even remotely close to where that child lives."

Recommendations

Recommendations for improving citizenship education focus on connecting these issues to students' everyday lives. Young people and teachers were asked if they had any suggestions for improving citizenship education in the schools. While responses among both groups range far and wide, they tend to dwell on a few themes: making the subject more vivid and exciting; offering more hands-on, participatory activities; and connecting the subject with the outside world through field trips, in-class speakers, and discussion of current events. In short, citizenship education should be as stimulating as possible, as participatory as possible, and should illustrate vividly the connection between the issues involved and young people's daily life.

The following quotations from the focus group sessions reveal social studies teachers' thoughts about how to make citizenship education more effective:

> If, for instance, you can experience starvation by not eating for 24 hours, or more perhaps, I think that really makes a much bigger impression. . . . That is when I see kids getting turned on and active. It is when something has hit them personally.
>
> Bring the issues directly to the people. . . . I think this country has gotten so big and everything has gotten so decentralized that nothing is real.

[Kids like simulations.] I mean, if they're doing it, they love it. . . . They don't want to hear about it or read about it; they want to do it.

You can give them background and information, but actually doing things is what really gives them what they need to go out and vote.

One of the most frustrating things is getting the students to understand how applicable any of these things are to their lives, to their futures.

# SECTION V

# INCREASING YOUNG PEOPLE'S POLITICAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What can be done to increase the number of young people who are active and concerned members of the community and the polity? The search for solutions must begin by taking into account what has been done already and what has been proposed. Surveyed teachers provide some insight into current school-based programs for encouraging political and community involvement. Both young people and teachers offer valuable reactions to hypothetical proposals for reform, and give additional advice about what else might be done.

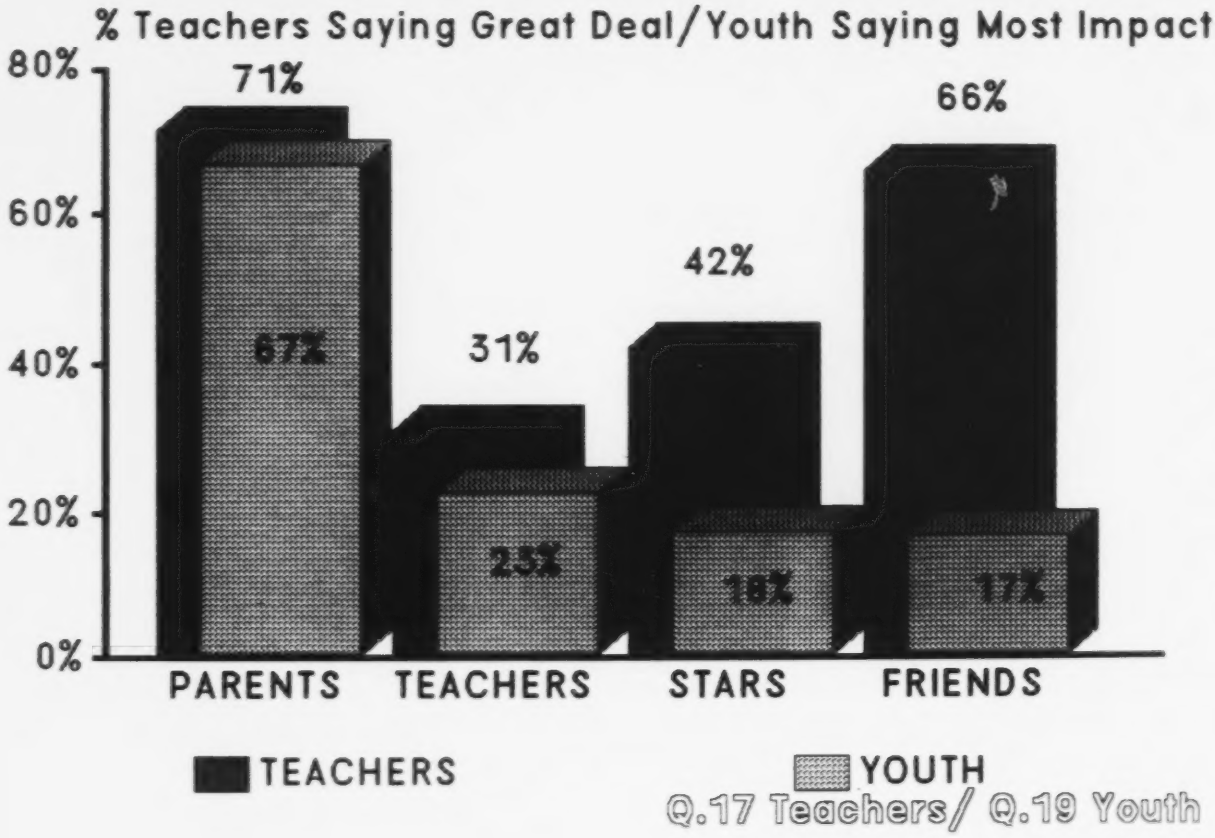
## Key Players

According to young people and social studies teachers, a comprehensive effort to increase civic and political engagement will require a partnership of teachers, parents, engaged young people, and such prominent role models or icons as movie stars and sports heroes. When asked which one or two types of people would have the most impact on encouraging youth to be good citizens and get involved in community service, young respondents place parents at the top of the list (67%), followed by teachers (23%), TV, movie, music, or sports stars (18%), and friends (17%). Among individuals not seen as potential influences are the president (5%), community (9%), business (6%), and religious leaders (4%), and neighbors (2%).

In response to a comparable question, social studies teachers draw slightly different conclusions. They see parents as potentially the most influential: 71% of all teachers say parents could have a great deal of influence on young people's thinking and behavior. Friends and peers, say teachers, are a close second; 66% say they wield a great deal of influence. This is an interesting contrast to the young people themselves, who

downplay peers as a source of influence. Media and sports stars (42%) rank third on teachers' list, and teachers themselves come in fourth (31%). As do young people, teachers say the president and local leaders would have relatively less influence on encouraging more widespread youth involvement. "I think their role model has to be someone immediate," comments a Providence teacher. "It has to be someone within their own circle, where they feel what they do does count."

# IMPACT SEL. GROUPS WOULD HAVE ON ENCOURAGING CITIZENSHIP & SERVICE



## Interpretation

While it appears that (proportionately) teachers value their own influence somewhat more highly than young people do, the disparity between where they place themselves on the scale--fourth--and where their students place them--second--illustrates a key point. From young people's perspective, what goes on in the classroom can have a significant impact on their inclination to participate in the political process and volunteer for community service. While on the one hand, teachers see themselves as caring more than any other group about imparting an understanding of democratic citizenship and encouraging involvement, on the other hand, they do not recognize the extent of their influence on young people's ideas and behavior in those areas. Civic and community engagement initiatives involving teachers may have to incorporate both an appeal to educators' sense of efficacy and an effort to correct their currently low estimations of their own potential impact.

## Existing Efforts

Surveyed teachers suggest that only about half of schools actively promote voter registration. Community service efforts are even less common and just modestly successful. Most teachers (79%) indicate that their school has some sort of voter registration program for students. When asked, however, whether it is "more of an active program that aggressively tries to register eligible students, or a passive program that only registers students who take the initiative," only 51% of the sample say their school has an active program.

By contrast, most schools do not require or encourage community service. Just 20% of teachers characterize their school's commitment to community service as very strong, and only 7% say their school requires some sort of service of all its students. An additional 38% report that their school encourages, but does not require, community activity. Even

among the 45% whose schools encourage or require volunteer service, most teachers believe that much less than half of each year's graduating class will have spent more than a few hours engaged in community service.

Reactions to Proposed Reforms

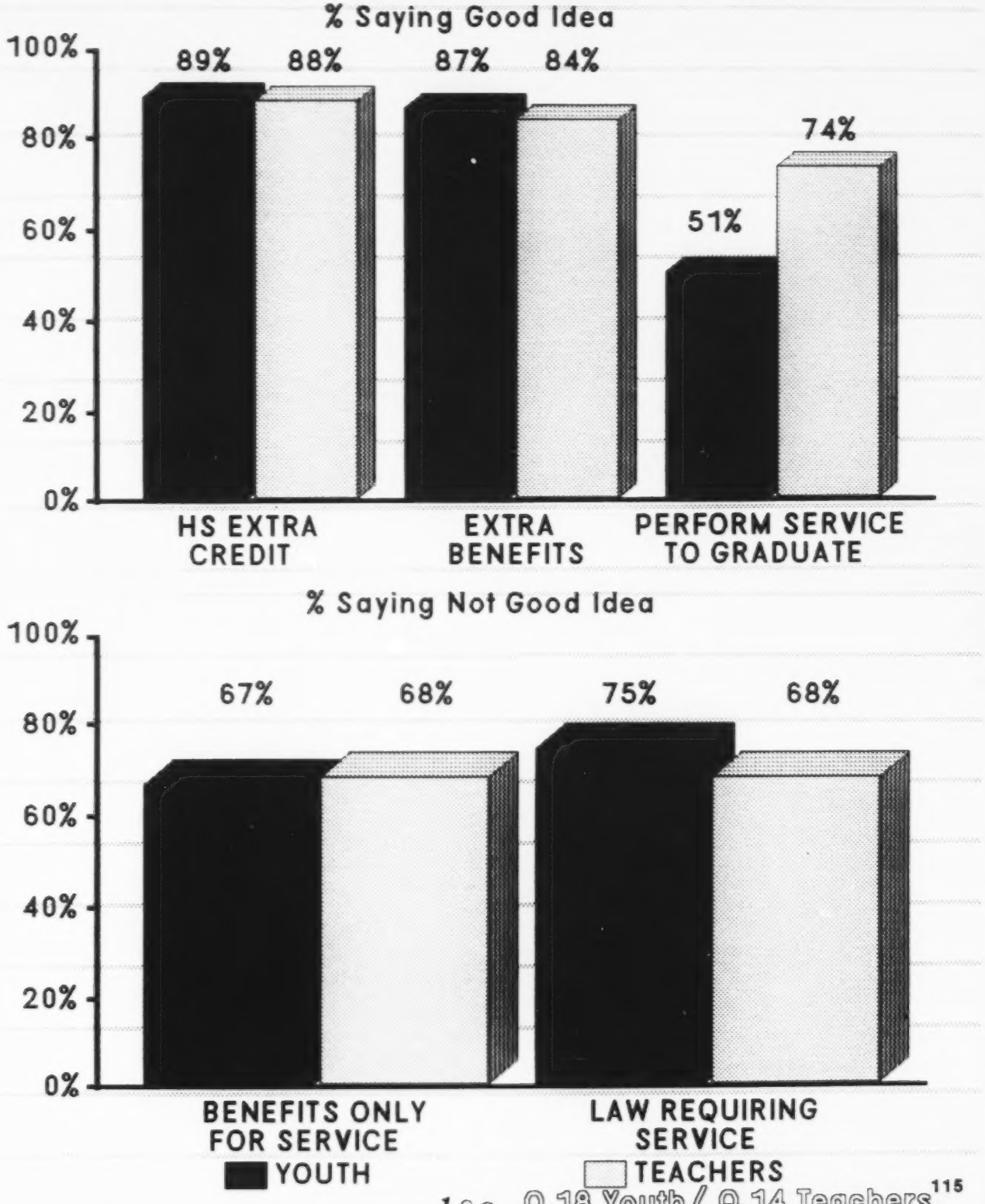
In assessing various proposals for increasing youth involvement, young people and teachers generally prefer carrots to sticks. Both groups of respondents tend to favor programs that offer incentives for volunteer service and tend to oppose programs that attempt to coerce participation. Each surveyed group was presented with a list of five reforms and asked whether they think each would be a good idea or a bad idea. Proposals favored by a large majority of young people are offering extra credit to high school students who perform community service and offering special federal benefits for national or military service. By a slim, 51% to 46% margin, young people also favor a mandatory community service requirement for high school students. As might be expected, 23- to 24-year-olds are markedly more enthusiastic about mandatory high school participation than are current high school age respondents.

By large margins, young people reject as bad ideas a mandatory national service program and a federal policy of restricting benefits such as student loans to people who have performed national or military service. Some of the one-on-one respondents suggest that many of their peers would find ways of evading a participation requirement. One young woman (who has done volunteer work in the past year) says, "Our country is fixed so you're not forced to do anything, and if you can get by without doing something and not getting caught, you're going to do it." Other respondents, such as this 20-year-old from Minneapolis, emphasize the root meaning of

volunteerism in explaining their opposition to legally imposed service: "The person shouldn't feel obligated; it has to come from within."

Social studies teachers do favor mandatory service for all high school students. Teachers' responses to the proposals parallel those of young people with one exception. By 74% to 26%, teachers favor requiring community service as a prerequisite for high school graduation. Reactions are mixed among teachers in the focus groups. One teacher brands a coercive national program as "blackmail." Another expresses misgivings about a mandatory high school requirement: "Public service, to me, should be service which is volunteered, you do from your heart--not because it is legislated."

# SUGGESTIONS FOR INCREASING INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY SERVICE




Q.18 Youth/ Q.14 Teachers[115]

## Interpretation

Whatever their feelings about mandatory programs, teachers and young people are unequivocal in their support for creating more service opportunities in the community. Taking into account the time pressures and distractions young people face, it is not unreasonable to expect that volunteer service may have to be accompanied by strong incentives--or even "forced" onto their agenda. Interviewed young people and teachers, however, suggest there might be a "jump-start" effect from the service experience; once young people reap the good feelings that come from helping in the community, they may well make volunteering a habit.

## Other Ideas

In the one-on-one interviews, young people were asked for their thoughts and suggestions about what should be done to encourage more widespread civic and political involvement. Responses range from making it fun, to offering some sort of incentive, to appealing to young people's sense of fairness and reason. As we found with teachers, a recurrent theme in the context of political involvement has to do with demonstrating more vividly the connections between politics and government and people's everyday lives. The following is a representative collection of the advice one-on-one respondents say they would give to persuade others their age to join in volunteer activities:

> Try to let them know I'm sure people have done stuff for them in the past, and it's probably time that they raised a hand to help somebody else.
>
> I would let the kids know the community is theirs and they should work for it; that's why they should get involved.
>
> I would try and make it look fun.
>
> Make it a fad or appealing to them, more entertaining.

It will be fun, interesting; you will get something out of it. They'll be a lot of pretty girls or a lot of cute guys and it'll be fun.

I would take them on a tour of the streets of New York and see how the people live--maybe make them live like that for a day, and that would change the way they thought.

I would round up people I know of that are good leaders and that can motivate people and appreciate volunteerism, and I'd work with them to round up other unmotivated people.

I'm kind of in charge of it now. First, we pull the kids in through different resources. We go skating, then plan a service project or something to help other people out.

Offer something free if they did it, like an ice cream cone.

I would probably have them work with children or with older people, because you see the most gratification in these two classes of people. They seem to depend on you, and I think young people would see that and feel needed.

Tell them it would go on their college record and make them look good.

If they look around and see what the community is and be able to at least imagine what it could be, it might give them insight of what they could contribute to the community.

Let them feel what it's like to live with no home and no food.

Give them some kind of incentive, maybe a free T-shirt. Definitely give them some incentive.

Tell them straight out; be honest with them and let them know what a good feeling they will get out of it.

Take them to a rundown area, a ghetto. Maybe if they put their hands into it, it would be different.

Show the before and after of certain projects. Or you could turn them around and put them in that circumstance.

> You have to hook 'em. The good part isn't enough for youth today. You have to entice them into it--like fundraisers on TV. Should give more merit: maybe colleges should acknowledge it more, maybe the President.
>
> Tell them it's going to help them in the long run.
>
> Tell them to open up their eyes.

Perhaps the most telling comment is one made by a 16-year-old from Toledo, which underscores our earlier point about the need for schools, parents, and other groups to make a more noticeable effort to present young people with opportunities for involvement: "Well, you really don't have to convince kids. A lot of them like to do it anyway, but no one really asks."

A Note on the Demographics of Citizenship

On some of the key indicators of citizenship and civic participation--particularly in the area of community service--there are surprisingly few differences by demographic groupings in the results of this survey. On the central question of volunteering for community service activities, for example, blacks and whites say they have done so with virtually identical frequency, and there is little variation in responses to this question by family income or occupational status. Young people from households where neither parent attended college are somewhat less likely than average to say they have volunteered, as are youth who discontinued their education before college--but these are matters of degree rather than qualitative differences.

As with the experience of volunteering, there is relatively little difference among demographic groups in attitudes toward community service. Among virtually all groups, being involved in community service ranks at the bottom of seven goals we tested. By small margins, blacks and

Hispanics are somewhat more likely than whites to say helping their community is an important value, although blacks are less likely than whites to place high importance on "being a good American who cares about the good of the country."

If demographics produce only small differences in attitudes toward community service, they produce much larger and more significant differences when it comes to young people's relationship with the larger political system. The most important variable is parental educational attainment, as the following table reveals:

| | Both Parents Attended College % | One Parent Attended College % | Neither Attended College % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Know a great deal/quite a bit about how government works | 50 | 40 | 31 |
| Have a great deal/quite a bit of interest in government and politics | 50 | 42 | 38 |
| Strongly agree that "politics and government seem so complicated a person like me can't really understand what's going on" | 24 | 32 | 40 |
| Strongly disagree that "so many people vote in the national election that it doesn't matter much whether I vote or not" | 61 | 53 | 48 |

On these questions, the differences according to parental educational attainment are far stronger than those in a breakdown by race or economic status. These results reinforce our findings about the importance of parental influence in citizenship development. Even more significantly, they suggest that one key element of initiatives to stimulate a stronger sense of citizenship must include efforts to make young people more

confident in their ability to understand and deal with the larger political system. Some young people clearly become disenfranchised by their perception of the system's remoteness from their own lives and their ability to affect it.

The most important differences in attitudes by race relate not so much to understanding the system as to alienation from the leadership of the national government. While 51% of white youth say they can trust government do what is right most or all of the time, only 33% of black youth feel this way. Two-thirds of all blacks (66%) agree that government officials do not care about what the average person thinks, compared to 47% of white respondents.

# SECTION VI

# FINDINGS FROM THE ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

In order to obtain a textural supplement to the attitudes and opinions revealed in the survey data, Hart Research also conducted 100 in-depth interviews with young people across the country. Respondents were selected at random, but quotas for gender, age, ethnic background, education, and employment status were imposed and met. From Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon, from deep-South Verbena, Alabama, to industrial heartland Chicago, participants talked about their goals and concerns, their vision of America, their notions of citizenship and the political process, their reaction to civics courses in school, and their feelings about involvement in community service. Using our questionnaire as a script, interviewers probed at length for the kind of detailed, unprompted responses that the time and logistical constraints of a regular survey often preclude.

In general, the findings from our analysis of the main survey are reaffirmed in the results from the face-to-face interviews. We emphasize that these results were neither quantified nor intended for statistical extrapolation; rather, their purpose is to provide qualitative insights that lend context and richness to the main survey data. Perhaps these interviews' greatest value is that they allow us to identify a handful of young people whose electoral participation and volunteer activism are exceptional. This section of the report presents the "success stories" of six of these young Americans and compares their perspectives on issues of citizenship and civic values to those we found among respondents to the telephone survey.

## Personal Orientation

As we have indicated, America's youth tend to view themselves as members of a nation they see as special for the personal freedoms it affords. Far

from centering on constitutionally guaranteed rights, young people's interpretations of freedom are largely notions of license and opportunity. The six respondents on whom we focus here are both similar to and somewhat different from the youth in our main survey on this score.

When asked what they visualize for their future in 10 to 15 years, these six people almost unanimously speak of career success and fulfillment, financial security, and family life. For the most part, they are optimistic about the likelihood of achieving these goals, and express only mild worries about finding the "right" partner or making enough money to pursue their interests. "Without money, you can't do much," says Amy, age 16.

On the other hand, these respondents also demonstrate what distinguishes them from many of their peers: that is, an outward orientation on which perceptions of their relationship to other Americans are founded. While they see the potential for meeting their personal aims as virtually limitless, they exhibit deep concern regarding the nation's major problems, and this concern goes beyond caring; it is transformed into high expectations of themselves and a commitment to helping those who may be less fortunate. For Catherine, a 24-year-old resident of Washington, D.C., her life a decade from now will entail "making an important contribution to society and . . . [serving] as a role model to younger people."

Self-portrait of a Generation

Most of the in-depth interview respondents see their generation as having life both easier and harder than their parents' generation did, for reasons that are interrelated. They perceive themselves as having the license to

say anything and do as they please, mostly free from parental restrictions. They have their own money and cars (two-thirds of the 100 young people interviewed work, either full- or part-time); as well, they see boundless educational opportunities and career choices stretching before them.

There is a Catch-22 in this seemingly ideal situation, however. Precisely because of this generation's unfett ed lifestyle and wealth of options for the future, its members feel a tremendous pressure, both from society and from within, to perform well in school and to select a career path that will lead to success. Considering it a lot more difficult to be a young person today, Mitchell, a 24-year-old medical student from California, remarks, "I think we're expected to really go far in life, both professionally and academically. . . . Everyone now goes to college. You almost feel like you're wasting your life if you don't go to graduate school or into professional careers."

Society's and young people's own high expectations lead many members of the current generation to seek escape from these pressures through drugs and alcohol. Virtually all the 100 one-on-one respondents are emphatic about the extent and severity of the substance abuse problem.

Another phenomenon related to young adults' abundance of choices is seen by the six special respondents as a significant cause of their peers' inward focus and individualistic world view. "People have been given so many opportunities to help themselves with new technology that they seem to ignore other people who have less," says Drew, a 16-year-old we interviewed in Middletown, Delaware. In explanation of why young people tend not to become involved in community service activities, he suggests that "kids these days are moving two ways. It seems like we're splitting apart, whereas, when you look back at the hippie era, it seems that everyone had a

cause, something to pull them together to work together. . . . There are so many opportunities and so many different ways to go . . . that people are just going their own way."

Image of America

The cellular perspective that characterizes the opinions and behavior of most young Americans is belied by our six respondents' vision of their country. They exult not only in the freedoms ordained in the Bill of Rights, but in the many chances to join efforts to remedy the nation's ills and bring about change for the better. Catherine, for instance, is most proud of "the helping professions. I think the Peace Corps is something to be proud of. Any of the volunteer programs is something to be proud of--any of the government programs helping third-world countries, any movement we make against apartheid." Instead of sharing her fellow teenagers' sense of detachment from civic involvement, Jill, an 18-year-old living in Independence, Missouri, affirms her belief that "If we really get together and work at it, we can get things done."

Mitchell, a student at Stanford University, eloquently conveys the attitude of all six respondents highlighted in this section of the report when he explains what makes America special: "The fact that you have a voice through the political system--that there are enough organizations and enough people around who want to change things in society so you can always get involved in social action, social movements, and try to change what's going on. I think that's probably what makes America great."

## Lack of National Role Models

In contrast to previous generations, who had the likes of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Kennedys to look up to, today's youth find themselves heroless. Few, if any, of the 100 people interviewed name a political leader when asked who they most admire or wish to be like. "I can't really think of anyone on the national level that I'd consider to be a hero," admits Craig, age 22, from Spartanburg, South Carolina. Instead, most of these young people mention as "heroes" either athletic stars and other entertainment celebrities or people with whom they interact or have a personal relationship--such as parents, grandparents, and other family members, or teachers and academic administrators.

Without ignoring the implicit condemnation in the paucity of responses about government leaders, we may be encouraged by the fact that young people do find exemplary behavior close to home. Many of the one-on-one respondents express their admiration for a parent who participates in local politics, for a grandparent who works with the Salvation Army or Boys' Clubs, for a professor who has done pioneering research, for a refugee who came from Cuba with $57.00 in his pocket and now is a respected businessman, or for a friend's parent who is a high school guidance counselor. Catherine, for instance, finds her models of courage in "school teachers that teach in the inner city" and admires "people that give up their lives or don't go for the material rewards that are so tempting in society in order to help other people."

At the same time, we should not overlook young people's lack of regard for their country's leaders as a significant influence on their non-participation in both the governmental process in general and elections in particular. Catherine, whose heroes are the nation's educators and

volunteer workers, reflects on why so many people her age fail to vote: "I think there's a lot of cynicism in young people today. There's been so much scandal and so much sleaze and fraud going on in the government today. Every day you pick up the paper, there's some new sex scandal on [Capitol] Hill. You get to the point where you think that it's not worth being involved in, and that all politicians are corrupt--so why even be involved in it?"

Views of Citizenship

While a good many respondents from both the regular survey and the one-on-one interviews mention voting when asked to describe aspects of good citizenship, both groups tend to concentrate on manifestations of helpfulness, adherence to the law, and devotion to family as the most salient characteristics. On two levels, however, the six participants whose views we address here draw less self-oriented, more altruistic sketches of the ideal American citizen. In contrast to most of their peers, they portray the good citizen as someone who lives up to his or her responsibility to be informed about politics and current events, who is vocal in expressing opinions based on this knowledge, and who acts by voting to elect representatives whose issue positions they respect. "You need to respect the responsibilities of being a good citizen and not just say, 'I'm an American. I can do what I want.'" In addition, they describe a good citizen as one who lives according to John F. Kennedy's oft-quoted maxim, by asking what he or she can do for the country. Mitchell sums it up: "A good citizen is one who, while obviously looking out for themselves, can also put society's goals and societal benefits in perspective and have some desire to help society at large. A good citizen is one who votes, and

is actively involved in reading the newspaper, watching TV, and seeing what's going on, in both the United States and the world."

These six young people are truly engaged, intellectually and actively, in what goes on in government. Jill stresses the importance of staying abreast of politics and the issues of the day: "If I don't know what's going on and my neighbor doesn't know what's going on, pretty soon nobody's going to know what's going on and we're going to be in a real mess." Even the youngest among this group could be an effective spokesperson for a youth get-out-and-vote campaign. Sixteen-year-old Amy--who believes that the meaning of good citizenship is "to not only use the privileges of a citizen, but use the responsibilities of a citizen"--keeps up to date in order "to be able to have an opinion on it" and says she tries to influence her parents' decisions at the polls. She considers herself a good citizen because, "Even though I can't vote yet, I still get involved in elections. I keep up on who's running and what they're running about." She greatly looks forward to being eligible to vote in two years "because I'll make a difference." Similarly, Jill believes voting is crucial: "Otherwise, the government's not going to know what you want."

Apparently, however, the cynicism toward politicians we mentioned earlier extends also to many young Americans' attitude toward politics and the responsiveness of government in general. In the opinion of most one-on-one respondents, the nation's youth vote in smaller numbers today than did their predecessors largely because they feel dissociated from their government. To many, their single vote does not count, and their solitary voice cannot be heard. A strong sense of detachment is conveyed in the words of Drew (one of the study's most insightful and articulate participants) when he answers a question about his level of interest in

government and politics: "I have an interest because it affects us directly, but it's almost as if politics has lost its meaning of helping, of doing what people want it to do. I seem so far away from the decisions they're making that I kind of lose interest. It doesn't feel like I'm really involved."

Almost unanimously, the six young people and their co-respondents recommend greater efforts, on the part of parents, community leaders, and schools, to instill on the one hand a better understanding of how government works, and on the other a perception of voting as a duty and obligation. Drew explains his suggestion that the teaching of citizenship be started very early: "As soon as you turn 18, it's not like you can just switch on our 'vote' modes and go out and vote. I think if we were encouraged to be involved earlier on, then we'd definitely have a bigger [showing]."

The complexity of the American political system and the ups and downs of political campaigns seem daunting and off-putting to many young people, these respondents think. For this reason, 18-year-old Jill believes the system should get the following message: "Maybe they need to find a way to explain what's going on a little bit better--maybe on almost a lower level--for some of the young people to understand. I think they need to know that they're going to have to find a way to get us more interested in voting, or else it's just going . . . to get worse every year." She recommends mandatory classes on government and citizenship at the junior high level, well before youth are old enough to vote, in order to ingrain the importance of voting. "I think it should be in our heads that that's just something we're going to do, like we eat."

Many more of today's youth must come out of their civics courses sharing Amy's optimism and conviction that the system does work. Of her experience in these classes, Amy says emphatically, "[It's] something I will use. I need to know what I can do to make something that I--and a group of people--believe in become something that a nation can believe in."

The second aspect of citizenship endorsed by the six respondents is community service. In effect, volunteering for service projects is, for these young people, a given--something they take for granted will be a significant part of their lives. As is participation in the electoral process, the importance of giving their time and energy to community service is intrinsic in these interviewees. Simply put by Amy, "Part of the responsibility of being a good citizen is to help out other people."

None of the six active citizens on whom we focus seems to see himself or herself as exceptional. Rather, they view their role in the community as a matter of course. "I think anyone that you would consider a good citizen should get involved in some sort of voluntary community activity," says 22-year-old Craig, who feel he himself meets that criterion: "I try to do for others as much as I can. . . . If I ever have the chance to help anybody, I always do." Similarly, Catherine describes her relationship to those around her as an integral part of her daily life: "I'm involved in my community and I'm part of it. I don't . . . just worry about myself." The attitude displayed by these participants is partly a reflection of the example some have been set by family members; in larger part, however, it is the result of self-motivation--a genuine desire to help--and a less egocentric perspective on their place in the world.

Six Success Stories

The tales of these young people's involvement in community service encompass a range of activities, from the manual labor of a cleanup project, to the unstructured personal interaction of visits with the elderly, to the leadership initiative of helping coordinate a statewide advisory project on AIDS.

School sponsorship provides much of the impetus for respondents' participation in the various activities, although it seems the schools are seen more as a facilitator of opportunity than as a catalyst for change. At the secondary level, some of the schools have service clubs for students to join, but as Amy cautions, teachers and administrators could do more to encourage goal-oriented involvement and frequent activity; she has found that these groups' emphasis and orientation may shift from providing "service," their original intention, to being a "club" for socializing. Religious groups also share a role in offering chances for involvement.

Jill (Independence, Missouri). A 16-year-old high school student, Jill joined the Kiwanis-sponsored Key Club, one of many service clubs in her school, when she was a sophomore because some of her friends were members. In the past two years, her club has almost doubled in size, to 65 students. Jill and her friends go to a care center for the elderly to sing carols and spread Christmas cheer, go reverse trick-or-treating at two local hospitals, and donate their club's leftover money at the end of the year to charitable organizations. The Key Club also "adopted" a section of state highway so its volunteers could perform the unglamorous task of picking up "other people's trash." Jill says she does some work for the Salvation Army to earn National Honor Society credit.

In this young woman's case, a strong influence to participate in community service began at home. Her grandfather is very active in the Salvation Army, Kiwanis Club, and Boys' Club, and "does a lot to help others." Jill has clearly followed in her grandfather's footsteps, and is effusive in her enjoyment of her own experiences. She plans on joining the Circle K Club at the college she will attend. "I really like to help people. I like to make people happy and to make them feel better than they might've been feeling before."

Despite her enthusiasm, Jill opposes establishment of a law requiring community service, arguing that imposing "volunteer" work on youth who lack the inner motivation would be counterproductive. "There are too many people that don't care about community service, that don't care about working with others. It would just be almost disastrous to try to force people to do something like that. I don't think that it would be effective at all."

Amy (Tampa, Florida). Sixteen-year-old Amy researched the many service clubs active in her high school before deciding to "rush" for the one she "hadn't heard anything bad about" and to which some of her acquaintances belong. Every Tuesday and Thursday, members of her club go to a nursing home and simply help with anything they can. Taking part regularly in what may seem this modest activity has made Amy feel good about herself and what she is able to give to others who are shut in from the world.

She would tell other young people, from firsthand experience, that it "makes you feel good when you finish. You've got this really great sense of accomplishment." From Amy's remarks about how to encourage participation, we may infer a presumption that many young people think community service cannot be enjoyable. To counter potential resistance, therefore, Amy suggests that every effort be made to make the activities

seem fun, and recommends avoiding any negative connotations of the word "service" by calling them "help projects."

She is against a national law requiring all young people under age 25 to perform one year's public or military service, despite her conviction that "part of the responsibility of being a good citizen is to help out other people." Amy's opposition is twofold: she sees mandatory service as overriding basic freedoms, and predicts it would be destructive, rather than constructive, because the people who did not have the impulse to help would fight against doing so.

Drew (Middletown, Delaware). This tenth-grader at a private boarding school has been involved in Special Olympics basketball and makes weekly visits to patients in a local hospital. The Special Olympics program came to his school and asked for volunteers to work with disabled youth on an individual basis. Drew coached his assigned athlete, attended practices, gave encouragement, and acted as a friend and personal cheerleader. "I'm trying to be a good citizen--caring about people and doing something about it, rather than just caring."

Drew's school takes student volunteers to the hospital every Sunday, where they talk with patients, bringing outside news and describing their own background, classes, and whatever their newfound friends would like to hear about. From his volunteer experiences, Drew has come away with not only the satisfaction of knowing he has made a positive difference in these people's lives, but with a recognition of the tremendous need for others to do their share. "It made me feel good, but it also made me aware that not enough people are [involved]. It made me really feel that in the United States, especially [among] young people, there has to be more will to help others." He thinks people in his age group are probably less

involved in volunteer work than were previous generations, saying he fears "it might be something that we've lost."

If Drew had to speak about his own participation to encourage his peers to join a community service activity, he would emphasize the relative lack of sacrifice required. As with Amy's (and other respondents') remarks, we find in Drew's comments an underlying assumption that non-involved youth prejudge volunteer work as necessitating relinquishment of free time and as being somehow unpleasant or excessively difficult. Using the instance of his hospital visitation, Drew would counter such presumptions: "When I went to the hospital and just talked to these different people, I didn't even give up anything to go there. Maybe I gave up a soccer game on the front lawn on Sunday. But what that meant to me, and what this meant to this person--it meant so much more to this person than that soccer game would've meant to me. Then, it turned out to mean more to me because of that."

For Drew, good citizenship entails a concerted effort. He would tell other young adults, "Everyone wants the country to be the best it can be, and if they want the country to be the best it can be, they've got to work together."

Craig (Spartanburg, South Carolina). A 22-year-old in his fourth year at Clemson University, Craig has participated in several community service projects. Through his college fraternity, he is involved every year in a number of fundraisers for Multiple Sclerosis and in one for the homeless. It seems no one urged him to give of his time; instead, he says matter-of-factly, "I've just always volunteered to do anything they needed help with." At home, Craig has helped with a neighborhood association's cleanup project around a local lake.

Believing that schools and government leaders do not do a good job of encouraging young people to perform community service, Craig says he would convey to his peers the message that "The services they're going to get involved in are worthwhile, and the people will appreciate it more than they can imagine." He is in accord with his five compatriots in his reaction to all experiences as a volunteer, claiming he has "enjoyed it very much. I felt like I was doing something good for others who were less fortunate."

As did our survey respondents, Craig disagrees with the notion of legislated youth service. He holds the view that participation must be initiated of one's own free will, and thinks people his age will do a better job at an activity they are not forced to perform.

Catherine (Washington, D.C.). This 24-year-old is currently helping at a food bank in the nation's capital. After finishing college, she spent one year in Oakland, California, with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps food bank. Because she was uncertain of her career interests when she graduated, Catherine decided to pursue what she did know she wanted to do: volunteer work. She knew of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps through her Catholic college and so made the connection and her year-long commitment to that organization.

For her, the satisfaction of helping a handful of the nation's hungry outweighs what she expresses as the anguish of knowing the solution was only temporary--a daily applied bandage, not a panacea. "I felt very good about it. It was very difficult. It was just hard seeing people who didn't have a lot of food and definitely went to bed hungry at night and had their pride really taken away from them by having to wait in a mile-long line for bread and cheese. And it was hard to see that, knowing that I would never be in that situation."

While harboring a number of reservations, Catherine hesitantly agrees with the idea of federally legislated community or military service, though she stresses that such a program would probably meet with strong resistance and could not work without the proper groundwork. "I don't think you could enact it right away, because that would just take away all the freedoms that we love so much about America." She compares mandatory service with mandatory education, and suggests that schools could do more to encourage and integrate volunteerism into the education system; this could be followed by a year's service after high school. Rather than imposing any such requirements on young people, says Catherine, a nationwide campaign should seek citizens' input first. "Get people's opinions on it first and make sure there is going to be support for it."

Mitchell (Stanford, California). An extremely articulate and enthusiastic respondent, 24-year-old Mitchell is in his third year of medical school at Stanford University. He expounds the idea that choice of occupation is one way of giving to the community: "A good citizen tries to contribute, in their work or in their play, to things that benefit man in general." Thus, he has opted for the medical profession, because he will have the opportunity to help people every day.

With parents who are involved in the community and in local politics, Mitchell comes from a background of participation and service. In regard to volunteer work, he has just concluded his responsibilities as one of the coordinators of the California AIDS Leadership Committee, an unpaid position to which he was appointed. His group researched financing issues of AIDS treatment over the next ten years and the social ramifications of the disease, and made recommendations on developing support organizations for victims in trying to put together a comprehensive plan for dealing with AIDS in the state.

Earlier, as a college student, Mitchell spent two years doing volunteer work for Planned Parenthood, the East Palo Alto Housing legal office, and did "the usual charity stuff" when he was in high school. Of his contributions to Planned Parenthood, he explains that he got involved partly to fulfill the requirements of his honors thesis and partly because "it looked like fun." With other volunteers, he helped put together three or four television and radio public service announcements on teenage pregnancy.

He thinks conscription for military or community service is not a good idea. As well, he disagrees with making financial aid for education dependent on public service.

If he were put in charge of a campaign to increase young people's involvement in community service, he would first divide activities into different types. This would allow him to target people who have particular talents and areas of interest and match them with appropriate volunteer endeavors. In this way, Mitchell puts a new twist on his fellow respondents' belief that any motivation to do service projects must come from within. He recommends encouraging those who might not immediately be inclined to participate by determining what most interests them and "tapping" that motivation.

Aside from the humanitarian aspects of helping others, Mitchell sees other rewards. To him, contact with a variety of people from all walks of life is a mind-expanding, educational experience. He would tell his peers that "Meeting people from a different part of society is very rewarding. It's a good way of interacting with them while helping them and also seeing what they're like."

## A Spokesperson for the Campaign

As we mentioned earlier, our six in-depth survey respondents see few people they would wish to emulate among their country's political leaders. Mitchell responds to the question about who should appear in a commercial to induce youth to become more involved by suggesting a "young, charismatic politician"--but is unable to think of anyone suitable.

Drew strongly believes this state of affairs should be remedied, beginning at the top: "I think the president--whoever it may be--really needs to show the people that he is doing something for the people in the United States. I mean, you see him always talking about nuclear weapons and the arms race and the Soviet Union, and you never really see him working with the people . . . . You see him shake people's hands and kiss the babies and stuff, but you never see him helping the people that are less fortunate. If they had the president of the United States in a commercial, showing him actually helping those people, then maybe that would have some influence, and people wouldn't say, 'Oh, well, our leader's not even doing it, so why should we?'"

Lacking role models at the national level, young people are left to follow those examples set by friends and family. This has obviously worked very well for some, and perhaps could be applied to a formally structured youth involvement campaign. The interviewees we have spotlighted in this report (Mitchell, Drew, or Jill, especially) would probably do an excellent job--in an advisory capacity or even in lobbying or advertising efforts--of helping to convince their fellow young Americans to be informed, to vote, and to experience the rewards of community service firsthand.

# SECTION VII

# CONCLUSIONS

Any concerned group that wishes to increase substantially the extent and quality of youth engagement in community and national affairs has a difficult, but far from insurmountable, task ahead. The list of obstacles, while daunting, is offset in part by an inventory of resources and opportunities that point toward a strategy for promoting civic involvement. The following is a summary of the major challenges and opportunities identified by this study.

Obstacles

1. Most young people are not involved in activities beyond their immediate circle of family, friends, and school. They complain of having crowded lives. A majority do not engage in community service. Many, if not most, say they already have difficulty balancing the various demands on their lives without adding community service to their agenda. A majority rate personal happiness and well-being over service to their fellow man as top life goals.

2. Young people are disconnected from national affairs, and their level of alienation may increase as they get older. For the most part, they do not profess an interest in politics and national affairs, and believe they can discharge their citizenship obligations principally by obeying the golden rule. For many, the issue is not alienation or hostility to government; rather, it is disconnectedness--a failure to see any relation between politics and government and their own life. Detachment and cynicism may be an even larger issue for young people in the oldest age bracket, who are more likely to expect corruption and less-than-admirable behavior by political leaders and less likely to express a sense of political efficacy than their younger counterparts.

This survey's findings about young people's sense of disengagement from the political and governmental system reinforce the results of the poll on the "baby boom" generation that Hart Research conducted for Rolling Stone (as reported in the April 7, 1988, issue of the magazine). Nearly half of all baby-boomers (46%) indicated that politics is not important to their lives. The two surveys together suggest we may be facing a very real breakdown in the political system's ability to demostrate its relevance to a generation of Americans.

3. Youth and teachers agree that parents have the most marked effect on shaping young people's civic values, and that they have the most potential influence in encouraging greater participation. Yet, young people and teachers also concur that parents have done very little to promote active citizenship or community involvement. This shortcoming has, until now, placed tremendous pressure on relatively less efficacious people--primarily teachers--who have tried to compensate for parental inaction.

4. Young people do not seem to recognize the connection between democratic rights and democratic responsibilities. While they are quick to extol and take advantage of the individual freedoms and opportunities they are afforded, they fail to view themselves as having in return certain duties to perform and an active role to play as citizens.

Opportunities

1. The good intentions expressed by young people may be a generous impulse in search of opportunities. Members of today's younger generation are not, by and large, selfish or apathetic; they seem instead to be well-meaning people with weak civic skills. Most reveal a generosity of

spirit in their stated intention to perform community service and in their sense of obligation--albeit somewhat misplaced--to be generous and caring as part of good citizenship. Many say they would have become involved already, had someone presented them with a chance to do so. Future efforts to promote more widespread involvement should take these good intentions at face value and offer more opportunities for young people to act on them.

2. The existing core of interested and committed young people is a significant resource and a cause for hope. One-third of youth have volunteered in the community during the past year. One-quarter profess a high level of interest in and awareness of government and politics. About one-fifth count community service and being a good American as top life goals. While most young people are not engaged in politics or community service, the substantial minority who are comprise a critical base on which new efforts can build.

Young people and teachers agree that friends are an important influence on young people's values and actions. A number of face-to-face interview respondents stress the need for intensive, one-on-one recruitment of new community volunteers. All active, involved, and concerned young Americans should be encouraged to serve as role models and as partners in expanding the circle of participation.

3. Efforts at promoting political awareness and involvement can build on the natural link between community affairs and national affairs. Community involvement and political engagement, while distinct in some ways, are inextricably linked. Many, if not most, young people see their lives as connected to and affected by their community. For this reason, it may be easier to promote community involvement than political participation. On

the other hand, evidence abounds that volunteerism may lead to political activism. Those who have volunteered in their community are more likely than average to be interested in politics and government and to have voted or to intend to register and vote when they become eligible. Social studies teachers see an intimate connection between service and maintaining a healthy political process, citing lack of community involvement as the second most serious threat to American democracy.

The nexus between involvement in the community and interest and engagement in national issues suggests that community service might serve as a springboard to political activity. The common denominator is participation skills, and in the early stages it may be most important to encourage involvement wherever young people's interests lie, and then guide those nascent participation habits toward national affairs when they are more fully developed.

This is not to say that a simultaneous effort cannot and should not be launched to help illustrate more vividly the connection between national and global issues and people's everyday lives. Also, schools need to stress more vigorously the duties and responsibilities--as opposed to the privileges--of democracy.

In this regard, young people and teachers advocate widespread use of such hands-on forms of political participation as simulations, mock-elections, or internships in the political world. Just as parents often give their child a puppy or goldfish in order to teach them that living things need to be cared for responsibly, so must we inculcate an active sense of responsibility for the care and feeding of a fragile and valuable democratic society.

4. Young people's reports of the rewards of involvement suggest that participation may be self-perpetuating to a certain degree. Community volunteers among surveyed young people say their experiences have been immensely rewarding. Helping others made them feel good, and that good feeling presumably makes it more likely that they will do so again. A number of face-to-face respondents agree, suggesting that the trick is to get people to volunteer once, after which the psychic rewards of community service may transform an experiment into a habit. There is some evidence that the same may hold true for political participation as well. Voters, for instance, are much more likely than non-voters to be interested in following politics in the newspaper or on television and to know a lot about how government works.

To the extent that involvement is self-perpetuating, current and future efforts should attempt to "jump-start" large numbers of uninvolved young people by enticing them to give participation a chance. Certainly, however, those who are already engaged require some attention to sustain their interest and commitment. Involved youth must be nurtured at the same time that efforts to increase their numbers are enacted.

5. Teachers are key sources of influence, with their access to myriad resources and their well-developed participation skills. They are uniquely situated to make a difference on the issues at hand, and by all accounts they have--especially through their influence on young people's values. By mobilizing the resources and the authority of the schools, teachers can encourage and equip young people for a broad range of involvement. There is every reason to expect that teachers will be willing and effective partners in new participation initiatives. These efforts, however, should also take into account teachers' sense, perhaps accurate,

that they are currently doing all the work of inculcating civic and political values. Since they do not see themselves as part of the problem, teachers may balk at bearing a disproportionate share of the burden in implementing the solution. Efforts that do not call on parents and young people to take over their fair share of this responsibility may not win full support among educators.

6. Parental non-involvement may be an opportunity in disguise. By huge margins, young people and teachers see parents as the key to shaping strong participatory values. Both agree that parents have done little in the past. This may represent an opening to effect dramatic change. To the extent that parents themselves have not been shown how to encourage their children's involvement, and to the extent that they could reasonably be engaged in such efforts, the potential for positive change is tremendous.

FILLED-IN QUESTIONNAIRES

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 234-5570

Interviewer: 1006 Respondents
City/Town: April 28 - May 24, 1989
County:

| | |
|---|---|
| 50 | -1 Male |
| 50 | -2 Female |
| | 4 |

| Study #2900 Youth Values April/May 1989 | Area | Sample Point | Form | | Date | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | 6 7 8 | 9 | April/May | 10 11 | 1989 |

Hello, I'm calling from Hart Research, the national public opinion research firm in Washington, D.C. We are conducting a survey of people throughout the country, and I'd appreciate the chance to get your opinions. But first, could you please tell me how many people between the ages of 15 and 24 live in this household and are home now? _____ (WRITE IN)

HOW TO DETERMINE WHOM YOU ARE TO INTERVIEW IN THIS HOUSEHOLD:

A. IF ONLY ONE PERSON BETWEEN AGES 15 AND 24 LIVES HERE, INTERVIEW THAT PERSON.

B. IF MORE THAN ONE PERSON AGE 15 TO 24 LIVES HERE, INTERVIEW PERSON WITH THE MOST RECENT BIRTHDAY (WHO IS AT HOME).

---

1. What is your age?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 15 years old.... | 10 | USE FORMS A-1 & A-2 (AGE 15-17) |
| 16 years old.... | 10 | |
| 17 years old.... | 10 | |
| 18 years old.... | 10 | USE FORMS B-1 & B-2 (AGE 18-24) |
| 19 years old.... | 10 | |
| 20 years old.... | 10 | |
| 21 years old.... | 10 | |
| 22 years old.... | 10 | |
| 23 years old.... | 10 | |
| 24 years old.... | 10 | |

2a. Compared to when your parents were your age, do you think it's easier being a young person today or harder being a young person today?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Easier today..... | 23 | 23 | 24 | 22 |
| Harder today..... | 68 | 68 | 68 | 67 |
| About the same (VOL).... | 5 | 6 | 3 | 6 |
| Some of both (VOL)..... | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Not sure..... | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 |

2b. Please tell me which one of the following two statements comes closer to expressing how you feel about your future. (READ STATEMENTS SLOWLY.)

Statement A: I'm worried about the future because I'm not sure how well things will work out for me.

Statement B: I feel pretty confident that things will work out for me, and the future looks promising.

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Statement A..... | 26 | 28 | 24 | 27 |
| Statement B..... | 71 | 69 | 73 | 70 |
| Some of both (VOL)..... | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | 1 | - | - |

3. I'm going to read you some different goals that young people might have. On a scale of 10 down to 1, I'd like you to rate the importance to you of each one. If a particular goal is extremely important to you, pick a number closer to 10. If it has average importance, pick a number around 5 or 6. And if a particular goal is not really that important to you, pick a number closer to 1. You can select any number between 1 and 10, depending on how strongly you feel.

(MAKE SURE RESPONDENT UNDERSTANDS SCALE. READ EACH ITEM AND RECORD NUMBER ON APPROPRIATE LINE. IF RESPONDENT IS NOT SURE, RECORD THE LETTER "A." ROTATE ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Very/Extremely Important (9-10) | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Being involved in helping your community be a better place. | 24 | 25 | 20 | 30 |
| Having a close-knit family life | 68 | 60 | 71 | 81 |
| Enjoying yourself and having a good time | 56 | 63 | 50 | 57 |
| Doing well financially, making a lot of money | 51 | 55 | 49 | 46 |
| Being involved in your religion and living up to your religious principles | 38 | 38 | 37 | 34 |
| Being a good American who cares about the good of the country | 49 | 48 | 45 | 57 |
| Being successful in your job and career | 72 | 73 | 70 | 71 |

4a. When you think about the future for America, do you feel more optimistic that America's best years as a country are still ahead of us, or do you feel more worried that America's best years might already be behind us?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Optimistic/best years still ahead | 42 | 45 | 42 | 34 |
| Worried/best years might be behind us | 47 | 44 | 48 | 51 |
| Some of both (VOL) | 5 | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| Depends (VOL) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Not sure | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

(FORM A-1,B-1)

4b. What are the most important goals you would like to see America accomplish in the future? What do you feel are the biggest challenges that you would like to see our country deal with in the years ahead? (PROBE:) If you could change the country so it would be more the way you would like it to be, what changes would you make?

| | |
|---|---|
| World peace, no more wars | 35% |
| Get rid of drugs | 22 |
| Freeze nuclear arms | 20 |
| Help homeless | 17 |
| Better foreign relations with rest of the world, Russia | 14 |
| Help poor | 12 |
| More jobs, better wages | 12 |
| Don't know, no response | 4% |

(FORM A-2,B-2)

4c. If someone from another country asked you to explain what makes America special, what would you tell them? What are the things about America that you are most proud of? (PROBE:) What things do you think are most special about being an American?

| | |
|---|---|
| We have rights, freedoms no other country has | 63% |
| Freedom of speech, press | 23 |
| Freedom of choice | 21 |
| Land of opportunities, free entreprise | 19 |
| Democracy | 7 |
| People who live here make it special | 7 |
| Don't know, no response | 2% |

4d. I'm going to read you a list of goals for America that people say we need to accomplish as a country. Please tell me which one or two of them are the most important to you personally. (READ ITEMS SLOWLY, ROTATING ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Helping poor people and the homeless | 49 | 54 | 45 | 47 |
| Balancing the budget | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| Improving the education that young people get | 38 | 32 | 41 | 42 |
| Protecting the environment from pollution | 21 | 22 | 20 | 22 |
| Preventing drug abuse and stopping illegal drugs | 46 | 51 | 41 | 46 |
| Ensuring jobs and economic opportunity | 18 | 16 | 22 | 15 |
| None (VOL) | 1 | - | - | 3 |
| Not sure | - | 1 | 1 | - |

(FORM A-1,B-1)

5a. How would you describe a good citizen? What are some of the things that a good citizen does? (PROBE:) Anything else?

| | |
|---|---|
| Helps people in need, generous, caring | 43% |
| Abides the law, honest | 33 |
| Helps and cares about the community | 33 |
| Loves his country, proud to be an american | 14 |
| Hardworker, provides for the family | 12 |
| Involved in politics, votes | 12 |
| Don't know, no response | 3% |

5b. When it comes to being a good citizen, compared to most people you know, would you say you are one of the best, above average, just about average, or below average?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| One of the best | 5 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Above average | 37 | 36 | 41 | 33 |
| Just about average | 54 | 56 | 53 | 53 |
| Below average | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| Not sure | 1 | 1 | - | 1 |

6a. Suppose a foreign country invaded the United States and tried to take away some of the rights and freedoms we have in America. Which one of the following rights or freedoms would you fight the hardest to keep? (READ LIST SLOWLY. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE AND RECORD BELOW UNDER 6a.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The right to vote | 12 | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| Freedom of speech | 34 | 32 | 35 | 32 |
| Freedom of religion | 18 | 20 | 20 | 14 |
| The right to own private property | 8 | 7 | 8 | 10 |
| Freedom of the press | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| The right to protest | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| The right to pick your own career | 14 | 16 | 13 | 14 |
| All (VOL) | 7 | 5 | 6 | 12 |
| None (VOL) | - | - | 1 | - |
| Not sure | 1 | 1 | - | - |

6b. If you had to trade off just one of these rights or freedoms in order to keep all the others, which one would you be the most willing to give up? (REPEAT LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE AND RECORD ABOVE UNDER 6b.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The right to vote | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| Freedom of speech | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Freedom of religion | 11 | 12 | 11 | 10 |
| The right to own private property | 15 | 14 | 16 | 14 |
| Freedom of the press | 27 | 29 | 23 | 27 |
| The right to protest | 17 | 16 | 19 | 16 |
| The right to pick your own career | 11 | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| All (VOL) | - | - | - | - |
| None (VOL) | 5 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Not sure | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

7a. During the past year, have you volunteered for any community or neighborhood service activity? (IF "YES," ASK:) Could you tell me how you got involved in that service project? Was there a particular person or a thing that happened that helped you get involved in that service activity?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| No | 61% | -J SKIP TO Q.8. |
| Yes Got involved because: | | ASK Q.7b. |
| Involved through my school, school project | 8% | |
| Through friends, neighbors | 6 | |
| I wanted to help | 5 | |
| Involved through my church | 4 | |
| Helped in Special Olympics | 3 | |

(ASK Q.7B ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAY IN Q.7A THEY HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR A COMMUNITY OR NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE ACTIVITY. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q.8.)

7b. People who do volunteer or community service work have different reactions to it. I'm going to read you some possible reactions and then you please tell me which one or two are closest to the way you feel about your volunteer work. (ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| It was a good learning experience | 40 | 39 | 44 | 34 |
| I felt good about helping someone | 57 | 55 | 61 | 55 |
| I don't really feel that I got anything out of it | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| It was a chance to do something with my friends | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| I didn't like giving up my free time | 1 | - | 2 | 1 |
| I felt good about giving something back to my community | 47 | 49 | 44 | 49 |
| None (VOL) | - | 1 | - | - |
| Not sure | - | - | 1 | - |

(ALL FORMS)

8. I'd like to read you several activities people sometimes get involved in. For each one, please tell me if it is something you are pretty likely to do, or something you probably wouldn't do. If it is something you have already done, just say so. (READ EACH ITEM AND REPEAT CHOICES. ROTATE ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Pretty Likely To Do | Probably Wouldn't Do | Have Already Done | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Help an elderly neighbor..... | 41 | 4 | 55 | - |
| Age 15-18 | 41 | 3 | 56 | - |
| Age 19-22 | 40 | 5 | 55 | - |
| Age 23-24 | 43 | 3 | 53 | 1 |
| Get help for a friend who is abusing drugs..... | 72 | 4 | 23 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 76 | 4 | 19 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 71 | 4 | 24 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 68 | 3 | 28 | 1 |
| Volunteer to work on a political campaign..... | 28 | 61 | 8 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 35 | 54 | 7 | 4 |
| Age 19-22 | 24 | 67 | 8 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 24 | 62 | 11 | 3 |
| Serve on a jury when you are old enough. | 78 | 18 | 3 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 81 | 17 | - | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 79 | 18 | 3 | - |
| Age 23-24 | 71 | 17 | 9 | 3 |
| Volunteer to work one hour a week on a community project..... | 69 | 15 | 12 | 4 |
| Age 15-18 | 72 | 14 | 11 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 65 | 15 | 14 | 6 |
| Age 23-24 | 66 | 18 | 11 | 5 |
| Join the armed services..... | 29 | 64 | 4 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 36 | 57 | 3 | 4 |
| Age 19-22 | 25 | 70 | 3 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 24 | 65 | 9 | 2 |
| Write a letter to a government official or a newspaper to tell them your opinion..... | 57 | 21 | 20 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 61 | 20 | 17 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 55 | 21 | 23 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 55 | 22 | 21 | 2 |
| Help collect money for a needy cause.... | 58 | 8 | 33 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 66 | 5 | 29 | - |
| Age 19-22 | 55 | 8 | 35 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 48 | 13 | 38 | 1 |

9a. How much do you feel you know about the way the government works--a great deal, quite a bit, just some, or very little?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A great deal..... | 10 | 10 | 9 | 12 |
| Quite a bit..... | 29 | 29 | 31 | 24 |
| Just some..... | 39 | 37 | 38 | 46 |
| Very little..... | 21 | 23 | 21 | 18 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |

9b. When it comes to reading the newspaper or watching the news on TV, how much interest do you have in politics and government--a great deal, quite a bit, just some, or very little?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A great deal..... | 16 | 11 | 19 | 20 |
| Quite a bit..... | 26 | 26 | 24 | 29 |
| Just some..... | 39 | 42 | 40 | 37 |
| Very little..... | 18 | 21 | 16 | 14 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | - | 1 | - |

9c. Do you know the name of the governor of your state?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, can mention name.. | 68 | 68 | 69 | 70 |
| No, cannot mention name | 29 | 29 | 30 | 25 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 |

9d. Do you know how many years are in a term for U.S. president?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, four years..... | 95 | 92 | 96 | 96 |
| Other..... | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |

(FORMS A-1 & A-2)

10. How likely are you to register and vote in the first election after you turn 18--almost certain, very likely, fairly likely, or not very likely?

| | Age 15-17 |
|---|---|
| Almost certain..... | 62 |
| Very likely..... | 25 |
| Fairly likely..... | 6 |
| Not very likely..... | 6 |
| Not sure..... | 1 |

(FORMS B-1 & B-2)
10ab. Are you registered to vote? If "yes", did you vote in the 1988 election for president between George Bush and Michael Dukakis?

| | | Age 18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Registered, voted..... | 52 | 26 | 55 | 59 |
| Registered, not voted.. | 16 | 17 | 16 | 16 |
| Not voted..... | 32 | 57 | 29 | 25 |

(ASK ONLY IF NOT REGISTERED OR DID NOT VOTE IN 1988 ELECTION)
10c. How likely are you to register and to vote in the next election--almost certain, very likely, fairly likely, or not very likely?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost certain..... | 52 | 65 | 51 | 42 |
| Very likely..... | 16 | 25 | 17 | 7 |
| Fairly likely..... | 16 | 4 | 18 | 21 |
| Not very likely..... | 12 | 5 | 10 | 23 |
| Not sure..... | 4 | 1 | 4 | 7 |

(ALL FORMS)
11. How much do you think an individual can help to reduce some of the problems facing the country today? Can an individual make a great deal of difference, quite a bit of difference, just some, or very little difference?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A great deal..... | 25 | 26 | 23 | 24 |
| Quite a bit..... | 32 | 38 | 29 | 29 |
| Just some..... | 27 | 24 | 30 | 27 |
| Very little..... | 15 | 11 | 17 | 20 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |

12. Now I'm going to read you a few statements. For each one, please tell me whether you tend to agree strongly with the statement, agree slightly, disagree slightly, or disagree strongly. (READ EACH ITEM AND REPEAT CHOICES. ROTATE ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Strongly Agree | Slightly Agree | Slightly Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| America is the best country in the world to live in..... | 67 | 22 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 64 | 23 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 66 | 23 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 71 | 21 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on... | 34 | 36 | 19 | 10 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 29 | 37 | 23 | 10 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 37 | 33 | 16 | 12 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 36 | 38 | 18 | 7 | 1 |
| All Americans owe something to their country..... | 49 | 33 | 12 | 5 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 48 | 34 | 10 | 7 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 47 | 34 | 13 | 4 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 52 | 30 | 12 | 5 | 1 |
| If a person doesn't care how an election comes out, that person shouldn't vote in it.... | 42 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 41 | 23 | 17 | 17 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 46 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 43 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 1 |
| Young people seem less involved these days than they were in the past..... | 43 | 29 | 16 | 9 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 43 | 26 | 19 | 10 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 42 | 35 | 15 | 6 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 46 | 26 | 11 | 12 | 5 |
| The only responsibilities of being a good citizen are paying your taxes and obeying the law..... | 13 | 15 | 28 | 43 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 15 | 15 | 31 | 38 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 12 | 16 | 25 | 46 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 12 | 14 | 26 | 46 | 2 |
| Government officials don't care much about what average people think..... | 19 | 31 | 31 | 15 | 4 |
| Age 15-18 | 18 | 30 | 31 | 16 | 5 |
| Age 19-22 | 19 | 31 | 33 | 13 | 4 |
| Age 23-24 | 23 | 34 | 27 | 14 | 2 |
| So many people vote in the national election that it doesn't matter much whether I vote or not..... | 7 | 14 | 25 | 53 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 7 | 14 | 26 | 51 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 8 | 14 | 23 | 54 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 8 | 13 | 25 | 52 | 2 |
| I'd be willing to volunteer for military service if the President said there was a national emergency..... | 33 | 28 | 15 | 21 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 35 | 26 | 16 | 20 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 33 | 29 | 13 | 22 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 30 | 28 | 16 | 20 | 6 |

13. Do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, or none of the time?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All of the time..... | 4 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| Most of the time..... | 42 | 46 | 41 | 38 |
| Some of the time..... | 48 | 44 | 49 | 54 |
| None of the time..... | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

14. One of the things we want to know is what people think it means to be a good citizen. I'm going to read you different suggestions about this. For each one, please tell me if it is something all citizens should do, or if you think you can still be a good citizen without being involved in this activity. (FOR EACH ITEM BELOW, ASK:) How do you feel about (READ ITEM)--do you think this is something all citizens should do, or do you think you can still be a good citizen without doing this? or something that is not part of good citizenship. (ROTATE ITEMS ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Something All Citizens Should Do | Can Be Good Citizen Without Doing This | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attending church or religious services..... | 26 | 72 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 32 | 65 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 23 | 76 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 21 | 77 | 2 |
| Serving on a jury when you are called..... | 63 | 35 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 61 | 37 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 63 | 34 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 66 | 33 | 1 |
| Voting regularly in elections..... | 70 | 29 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 73 | 26 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 70 | 29 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 62 | 36 | 2 |
| Volunteering time to help in your community | 61 | 37 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 63 | 35 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 59 | 39 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 60 | 37 | 3 |
| Assisting police when you have seen a crime | 82 | 16 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 77 | 20 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 84 | 13 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 84 | 15 | 1 |
| Paying attention to what's going on in government..... | 65 | 33 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 62 | 35 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 66 | 32 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 68 | 30 | 2 |
| Giving money to charities..... | 49 | 48 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 51 | 46 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 47 | 50 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 46 | 50 | 4 |
| Being willing to serve in the armed forces | 36 | 61 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 37 | 60 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 35 | 61 | 4 |
| Age 23-24 | 37 | 60 | 3 |

15. Of the people on the following list, who has had the biggest effect on your thinking about what good citizenship is and what it means to be a good American? (READ CHOICES SLOWLY. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Your parents | 70 | 69 | 72 | 67 |
| TV, movie, music, or sports stars | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| The president | 9 | 10 | 8 | 9 |
| Religious leaders | 9 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| Successful business leaders | 4 | 4 | 4 | 7 |
| Community leaders in your local area | 4 | 4 | 4 | 7 |
| A teacher | 21 | 24 | 19 | 21 |
| A friend | 12 | 12 | 11 | 12 |
| A neighbor | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Other (VOL) | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| None (VOL) | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Not sure | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |

(ALL FORMS)

16a. Have you had any courses in school that taught you about how government works and about being a good citizen?

| | | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, have had courses | 75 | CONTINUE | 72 | 77 | 76 |
| No, have not had courses | 23 | SKIP TO | 26 | 22 | 21 |
| Not sure | 2 | Q.17. | 2 | 1 | 3 |

16b. How interesting do you feel those courses have been--very interesting, pretty interesting, not that interesting, or pretty boring?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very interesting | 23 | 24 | 22 | 25 |
| Pretty interesting | 48 | 55 | 44 | 41 |
| Not that interesting | 14 | 12 | 16 | 15 |
| Pretty boring | 14 | 9 | 18 | 18 |
| Not sure | 1 | - | - | 1 |

16c. Compared to other courses and subjects in school, do you feel your courses on government and citizenship have been more interesting, less interesting, or about the same?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| More interesting | 22 | 26 | 18 | 24 |
| Less interesting | 21 | 16 | 24 | 26 |
| About the same | 56 | 56 | 58 | 49 |
| Not sure | 1 | 2 | - | 1 |

16d. How much do you feel you have learned about government and citizenship from your courses in school--a lot, a fair amount, just some, or not that much?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A lot | 26 | 28 | 25 | 25 |
| A fair amount | 49 | 54 | 49 | 37 |
| Just some | 16 | 13 | 17 | 22 |
| Not that much | 9 | 5 | 9 | 16 |
| Not sure | - | - | - | - |

(FORM A-2, B-2)

16e. What suggestions do you have about improving the way our schools teach students about government and citizenship in America? (PROBE:) How could, the courses on government be better? (PROBE:) What would make them more interesting to you?

| | |
|---|---|
| Make it interesting, exciting, fun | 16% |
| Current events, more realistic | 11 |
| Give more details, more in-depth information | 10 |
| Bring in more speakers | 10 |
| More field trips, field trips to government offices | 9 |
| Make students get involved, hands on experience | 9 |
| Don't know, no response | 30% |

17. Some young people say they are not interested in being active citizens or getting involved in volunteer activities for a variety of reasons. I'm going to read you several possible reasons, and for each one I mention, please tell me if you think it is a strong reason or a weak reason young people are not more involved.

| | Strong Reason | Weak Reason | In Between (VOL) | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents don't encourage young people to get involved..... | 45 | 49 | 5 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 43 | 50 | 6 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 43 | 51 | 5 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 52 | 44 | 3 | 1 |
| The schools do not do a very good job teaching young people how to be good citizens..... | 43 | 49 | 7 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 39 | 53 | 7 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 45 | 48 | 6 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 46 | 45 | 8 | 1 |
| There are too many other pressures on young people--like getting good grades or getting a good job--that keep them from getting involved in community service activities..... | 53 | 41 | 5 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 58 | 34 | 7 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 52 | 43 | 4 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 46 | 49 | 5 | - |
| Politicians set a bad example, which discourages young people from getting involved in public life..... | 40 | 49 | 8 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 32 | 57 | 8 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 44 | 47 | 7 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 46 | 42 | 9 | 3 |
| Things are so complicated and the problems facing the country are so big that it doesn't seem that one person's involvement would matter that much..... | 30 | 62 | 6 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 29 | 62 | 7 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 33 | 61 | 4 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 27 | 64 | 8 | 1 |
| No one asks young people to get involved or shows them how they can.. | 42 | 49 | 7 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 39 | 52 | 7 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 43 | 48 | 6 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 47 | 45 | 7 | 1 |
| People should take care of themselves and should't expect others to do things for them..... | 35 | 58 | 6 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 34 | 59 | 6 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 37 | 57 | 5 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 32 | 59 | 8 | 1 |

18. I'm going to read you some suggestions that have been made about how to get young people more involved in service to the community or the country. For each suggestion I mention, please tell me if you think it is a good idea or not such a good idea.

| | Good Idea | Not A Good Idea | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Require all high school students to perform some community service activity after school, before they can graduate | 51 | 46 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 48 | 49 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 51 | 46 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 60 | 37 | 3 |
| Give high school students extra credit toward graduation if they get involved in community service activities | 89 | 10 | 1 |
| Age 15-18 | 90 | 9 | 1 |
| Age 19-22 | 88 | 11 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 87 | 11 | 2 |
| Have a national law requiring all young people to spend one year in public service before they reach age 25--either in community service or service in the military | 22 | 75 | 3 |
| Age 15-18 | 25 | 73 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 17 | 80 | 3 |
| Age 23-24 | 24 | 72 | 4 |
| Have a national law that gives young people extra benefits--like student loans and other financial assistance--if they get involved in community service or military service | 87 | 11 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 87 | 11 | 2 |
| Age 19-22 | 87 | 11 | 2 |
| Age 23-24 | 88 | 9 | 3 |
| Have a national law that says young people can only get government benefits like student loans for college and other financial assistance if they get involved in community service or military service | 31 | 67 | 2 |
| Age 15-18 | 32 | 65 | 3 |
| Age 19-22 | 30 | 69 | 1 |
| Age 23-24 | 33 | 64 | 3 |

19. Which one or two of the following types of people do you think would have the most impact on encouraging young people to be good citizens and get involved in community service? (READ LIST. ACCEPT NO MORE THAN TWO RESPONSES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents | 67 | 63 | 71 | 68 |
| TV, movie, music, or sports stars | 18 | 19 | 17 | 19 |
| The president | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Religious leaders | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| Successful business leaders | 6 | 5 | 7 | 8 |
| Community leaders in your local area | 9 | 10 | 8 | 11 |
| Teachers | 23 | 22 | 25 | 23 |
| Their friends | 17 | 20 | 15 | 18 |
| Their neighbors | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| None (VOL) | - | - | 1 | - |
| Not sure | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |

20. Let me read you a list of programs that people might be willing to be involved in. Which one or two, if any, of these programs would you be willing to volunteer an hour a week to help with? (READ LIST SLOWLY, STARTING AT THE BOTTOM ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-23 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Helping take care of young children in day-care centers..... | 38 | 41 | 35 | 38 |
| Teaching reading skills to people who cannot read..... | 29 | 25 | 32 | 33 |
| Distributing food to the homeless at local shelters..... | 22 | 23 | 22 | 21 |
| Helping in environmental cleanup activities, like recycling drives or litter removal..... | 17 | 18 | 17 | 17 |
| Spending time with senior citizens in nursing homes..... | 24 | 26 | 21 | 26 |
| Participating in a neighborhood crime prevention program..... | 27 | 24 | 29 | 29 |
| All (VOL)..... | 5 | 5 | 6 | 8 |
| None (VOL)..... | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Not sure..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

FACTUALS: These last questions are for statistical purposes only.

F1a. Are you currently a student? (IF "YES," ASK:) What grade or year of school are you in?

| | | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-23 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8th grade or below..... | 1 | | 2 | - | - |
| 9th grade..... | 7 | | 17 | - | - |
| 10th grade..... | 10 | | 24 | - | - |
| 11th grade..... | 9 | ASK F1b. | 22 | - | - |
| 12th grade..... | 11 | | 23 | 4 | 1 |
| Technical/vocational school. | 2 | | - | 3 | 2 |
| 1st or 2nd year of college.. | 13 | SKIP TO | 4 | 25 | 6 |
| 3rd or 4th year of college.. | 10 | F2a. | - | 19 | 12 |
| Graduate school..... | 1 | | - | 2 | 3 |
| Not currently a student..... | 36 | SKIP TO | 8 | 47 | 74 |
| Not sure/refused..... | - | F1c. | - | - | 2 |

F1b. Do you plan to attend college?

| | | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes..... | 31 | SKIP TO | 72 | 4 | 1 |
| No..... | 4 | F2a. | 9 | - | - |
| Not sure..... | 3 | | 7 | - | - |

F1c. What is the last grade or year of school you have completed?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-23 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8th grade or below..... | - | - | 1 | - |
| 9th grade..... | 1 | - | 1 | 1 |
| 10th grade..... | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11th grade..... | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| 12th grade..... | 18 | 5 | 25 | 32 |
| Technical/vocational school. | 1 | - | 2 | 1 |
| 1st or 2nd year of college.. | 6 | - | 8 | 14 |
| 3rd or 4th year of college.. | 5 | - | 3 | 16 |
| Graduate school..... | - | - | - | 2 |
| Not sure/refused..... | - | 1 | 1 | 3 |

(ASK EVERYONE)
F2a. Are you currently employed at a paying job?

| | | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, employed..... | 61 | ASK F2b. | 43 | 71 | 75 |
| No, not employed..... | 39 | SKIP TO | 57 | 29 | 25 |
| Not sure/refused..... | - | F3. | - | - | - |

F2b. How many hours a week do you work on the average?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 5 hours..... | 1 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 5 to 9 hours..... | 2 | 5 | - | 1 |
| 10 to 19 hours..... | 7 | 11 | 6 | - |
| 20 to 29 hours..... | 10 | 12 | 9 | 7 |
| 30 to 39 hours..... | 7 | 4 | 10 | 7 |
| 40 hours..... | 18 | 6 | 24 | 30 |
| More than 40 hours..... | 15 | 2 | 20 | 30 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |

(ALL FORMS)
F3a. What type of work does your father do? What is the job called? (BE SURE TO CLASSIFY PROPERLY. WRITE JOB DESCRIPTION IN SPACE BELOW. IF "UNEMPLOYED," GET USUAL OCCUPATION.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| High-level professional..... | 7 | 7 | 9 | 5 |
| Middle-level professional..... | 13 | 14 | 11 | 13 |
| Executive, manager..... | 4 | 4 | 3 | 6 |
| Sales, proprietor..... | 8 | 8 | 7 | 12 |
| White collar worker..... | 6 | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| Skilled laborer..... | 44 | 42 | 47 | 39 |
| Semi- and unskilled laborer..... | 5 | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Farmer, rancher..... | 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Homemaker..... | - | - | - | - |
| Retiree..... | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Student..... | - | - | - | - |
| Other (describe below).. | - | - | - | - |
| Not sure/refused..... | 8 | 12 | 5 | 7 |

F3b. What type of work does your mother do? What is the job called? (BE SURE TO CLASSIFY PROPERLY. WRITE JOB DESCRIPTION IN SPACE BELOW. IF "UNEMPLOYED," GET USUAL OCCUPATION.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| High-level professional..... | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| Middle-level professional..... | 21 | 23 | 20 | 20 |
| Executive, manager..... | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Sales, proprietor..... | 6 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| White collar worker..... | 17 | 18 | 19 | 13 |
| Skilled laborer..... | 14 | 14 | 12 | 17 |
| Semi- and unskilled laborer..... | 6 | 6 | 5 | 6 |
| Farmer, rancher..... | 1 | - | 2 | - |
| Homemaker..... | 29 | 23 | 33 | 33 |
| Retiree..... | - | - | - | - |
| Student..... | - | 1 | - | - |
| Other (describe below).. | - | 1 | - | - |
| Not sure/refused..... | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |

F4. Has either of your parents attended college? (IF "YES," ASK:) Is that your mother, your father, or both?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mother attended college... | 12 | 13 | 12 | 12 |
| Father attended college... | 15 | 15 | 13 | 16 |
| Both attended college..... | 26 | 31 | 25 | 20 |
| Neither attended college.. | 45 | 37 | 49 | 52 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 2 | 4 | 1 | - |

F5. How often do you attend church, synagogue, or religious services?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| About once a week..... | 34 | 40 | 31 | 28 |
| Several times a month..... | 21 | 21 | 23 | 18 |
| Several times a year..... | 25 | 22 | 28 | 28 |
| Never..... | 18 | 15 | 17 | 25 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

(FORMS B-1 & B-2)

F6. How would you describe your overall point of view in terms of the political parties? Would you say you are mostly Democratic, leaning Democratic, completely Independent, leaning Republican, or mostly Republican?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mostly Democratic..... | 22 | 21 | 21 | 23 |
| Leaning Democratic..... | 11 | 12 | 12 | 9 |
| Completely Independent.... | 27 | 24 | 25 | 32 |
| Leaning Republican..... | 11 | 11 | 13 | 9 |
| Mostly Republican..... | 24 | 26 | 23 | 22 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 5 | 6 | 6 | 5 |

F7. Thinking about your general approach to politics, do you consider yourself to be very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very liberal..... | 12 | 12 | 12 | 14 |
| Somewhat liberal..... | 22 | 22 | 24 | 20 |
| Moderate..... | 28 | 24 | 25 | 34 |
| Somewhat conservative..... | 20 | 20 | 24 | 16 |
| Very conservative..... | 11 | 12 | 11 | 10 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 7 | 10 | 4 | 6 |

(ALL FORMS)

F8. Compared to other American families, would you say your family income is far below average, below average, about average, above average, or far above average? (IF "NOT SURE," ASK:) Well, what would be your best guess?

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Far below average..... | 4 | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| Below average..... | 10 | 7 | 10 | 14 |
| About average..... | 51 | 53 | 53 | 45 |
| Above average..... | 29 | 30 | 29 | 27 |
| Far above average..... | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| Not sure/refused..... | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |

F9. What is your race or ethnic background? (READ CHOICES.)

| | | Age 15-18 | Age 19-22 | Age 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| White | 72 | 71 | 72 | 73 |
| Black | 14 | 16 | 15 | 10 |
| Hispanic | 8 | 7 | 7 | 12 |
| American Indian | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| Asian/Oriental | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Other | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Not sure/refused | - | - | - | 1 |

May we please have your name and the town in which you live for validation purposes?

RESPONDENT'S NAME:

Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss _____
(circle one)

Town: _____

RECORD THE FOLLOWING--DO NOT ASK!

Telephone Number: _____ / _____
(Area Code)

Length of Interview

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 minutes or less | - |
| 11 to 14 minutes | 5 |
| 15 to 19 minutes | 28 |
| 20 to 24 minutes | 34 |
| 25 to 29 minutes | 22 |
| 30 minutes or more | 11 |

Time interview began: _____ : _____ a.m. p.m.
(circle)

Time interview ended: _____ : _____ a.m. p.m.
(circle)

THIS IS A BONA FIDE INTERVIEW AND HAS BEEN OBTAINED ACCORDING TO MY AGREEMENT WITH HART RESEARCH

Interviewer's Name (PLEASE SIGN):

_____

Validated By: _____ Date: _____

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 234-5570

Interviewer: 405 Respondents
City/Town: May 26- June 14, 1989
County:

| | |
|---|---|
| 73 | -1 Male |
| 27 | -2 Female |
| | 4 |

| Study #2900T Social Studies Teachers May 1989 | Area | Sample Point | Form | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | 6 7 8 | 9 | May 10 11 1989 |

(READ THE FOLLOWING INTRODUCTION ONLY FOR RESPONDENTS WHOM WE CALL FROM POSTCARDS:) Hello, I'm calling from Peter D. Hart Research, the national public opinion research firm in Washington, D.C. We wrote to you recently about the survey of social science teachers we are conducting throughout the nation, and you were kind enough to reply. Is this a good time to conduct the interview, which will last about 15 minutes? (IF NOT, MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AND RECORD THE INFORMATION BELOW.)

1. First of all, when you think about the future for America, do you feel more optimistic that America's best years as a country are still ahead of us, or do you feel more worried that America's best years might already be behind us?

| | |
|---|---|
| Optimistic/best years still ahead..... | 56 |
| Worried/best years might be behind us.. | 35 |
| Some of both (VOL)..... | 6 |
| Depends (VOL)..... | 3 |
| Not sure..... | - |

2. One of the things we are interested in finding out is what people think it means to be a good citizen. How would you personally describe a good citizen? What are some of the things that a good citizen does? (PROBE:) Anything else?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Votes; participates in political process | 46% | Cares about the community | 26% |
| Law abiding; doesn't break rules | 27 | Cares about fellow men | 24 |
| Involved, concerned | 26 | Patriotic; loves his country | 14 |
| Knowledgeable; informed on what is going on | 26 | Aware of his rights and responsibilities | 10 |
| | | Good morals; honest | 10 |
| | | Don't know; no response | - |

3. I'm going to read you a few things that some people might think of as threats to American democracy. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a very serious threat, a fairly serious threat, just somewhat serious, or not that serious a threat to democracy. (REPEAT QUESTION FOR EACH ITEM. ROTATE ITEMS ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Very Serious | Fairly Serious | Just Somewhat Serious | Not That Serious | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The role of special interests in funding political campaigns | 27 | 25 | 32 | 16 | - |
| Low voter turnout and involvement in the political process | 62 | 19 | 14 | 5 | - |
| The ethics of public officials | 38 | 31 | 25 | 6 | - |
| Low levels of involvement in community and civic activities | 40 | 32 | 21 | 7 | - |
| Negative advertising in political campaigns | 21 | 23 | 33 | 23 | - |

4a. When you think about high school students today compared to those a decade ago, would you say today's high school students are more likely to become good citizens than students were ten years ago, less likely to become good citizens, or about the same as students were ten years ago?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| More likely..... | 16 | About the same..... | 46 |
| Less likely..... | 37 | Not sure..... | 1 |

4b. And in general, would you say today's high school students are more active and involved in the community at this stage of their life than students were ten years ago, less active and involved, or about the same as high school students ten years ago?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| More active..... | 18 | About the same..... | 36 |
| Less active..... | 46 | Not sure..... | - |

4c. Would you say they are more interested in politics and public affairs, less interested, or about the same as high school students were ten years ago?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| More interested..... | 21 | About the same..... | 34 |
| Less interested..... | 45 | Not sure..... | - |

4d. And would you say that high school students today know more about politics and public affairs, know less, or know about the same amount as students did ten years ago?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Know more..... | 26 | About the same..... | 36 |
| Know less..... | 37 | Not sure..... | 1 |

4e. By time they graduate from high school, what percentage of the students at your school would you say have a basic understanding of government and the political process? (DO NOT READ CHOICES.)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10% or less..... | 4 | 51% to 60%..... | 9 |
| 11% to 20%..... | 4 | 61% to 70%..... | 11 |
| 21% to 30%..... | 11 | 71% to 80%..... | 19 |
| 31% to 40%..... | 6 | 81% to 90%..... | 15 |
| 41% to 50%..... | 13 | 91% to 100%..... | 8 |
| | | Not sure..... | - |

(FORM A)

5. What do you think are the biggest obstacles or problems in encouraging young people to become good citizens today? (PROBLE:) What do you think could be done to help or encourage young people to become good citzens?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lack of parental involvement | 26% | Students only care about money; becoming too self-centered | 16 |
| More adult role models, not only politicians but sports personalities, musicians | 21 | Show students how they can make a difference; make them believe in themselves | 15 |
| Students don't care, the[y] have too many outside inter[e]s | 20 | Too many problems with drugs; students lack morals | 13 |
| Politicians setting bad examples discourages students | 18 | | |
| | | Don't know; no response | - |

6. Let me read a few specific educational goals that a high school might have. For each one, please tell me how you would rate the importance your own school gives to it--is it a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority at your school? (READ EACH ITEM AND REPEAT CHOICES, IF NECESSARY. ROTATE ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | High | Medium | Low | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Basic literacy and math skills.... | 81 | 17 | 2 | - |
| Computer literacy..... | 38 | 46 | 16 | - |
| Preparation for citizenship..... | 32 | 53 | 15 | - |
| Preparation for college..... | 59 | 35 | 6 | - |
| Vocational training..... | 26 | 40 | 34 | - |

7a. Let me read you a list of goals that different social studies teachers might have for their students. Please tell me which one or two of these best describe what you try to develop in your students. (READ LIST SLOWLY. ACCEPT NO MORE THAN TWO RESPONSES. ROTATE BOTTOM TO TOP ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW .)

| | |
|---|---|
| A knowledge of history | 35 |
| An understanding of other cultures | 34 |
| An interest in participating in the democratic process | 38 |
| The ability to think clearly | 55 |
| An understanding of government | 24 |
| None (VOL) | - |
| Not sure | - |

7b. Compared to other responsibilities and goals you deal with in your job, how important is trying to help young people become good citizens--the most important part of your job, one of the most important parts of your job, a fairly important part, or not that important?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| The most important | 24 | Fairly important | 16 |
| One of most important | 59 | Not that important | 1 |
| | | Not sure | - |

8. How much do you think (READ ITEM) (care/cares) how much students learn about democratic citizenship and participation in public affairs--a great deal, quite a bit, just some, or very little? (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM.)

| | Great Deal | Quite A Bit | Just Some | Very Little | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The authors of social studies textbooks | 15 | 28 | 39 | 14 | 4 |
| The parents in the community where you teach | 9 | 19 | 50 | 21 | 1 |
| The Board of Education in your school district | 21 | 33 | 31 | 13 | 2 |
| Your own school administration | 25 | 43 | 25 | 7 | - |
| The teachers in your school | 29 | 43 | 24 | 4 | - |

9. Just thinking about your own school, how successful do you think the social studies curriculum is in (READ ITEM)--would you say it is very successful, fairly successful, just somewhat successful, or not very successful? (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM BELOW. ROTATE ORDER ON EVERY OTHER INTERVIEW.)

| | Very Successful | Fairly Successful | Just Somewhat Successful | Not Very Successful | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching students the basic facts and principles of American democracy | 22 | 54 | 22 | 2 | - |
| Encouraging students to become involved in community activities | 14 | 36 | 36 | 14 | - |
| Developing an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship | 19 | 50 | 26 | 5 | - |
| Encouraging students to vote and participate in politics as adults | 31 | 35 | 27 | 7 | - |
| Developing an understanding of and interest in current events | 27 | 46 | 21 | 6 | - |

10. Where do most students at your school learn about citizenship--in specific courses designed for that purpose, in American history courses, in some other part of the curriculum, or through extracurricular activities?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Specific courses..... | 52 | Other part of curriculum | 10 |
| American history..... | 30 | Extracurricular..... | 6 |
| | | Not sure..... | 2 |

11. When it comes to teaching civics and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, which one or two of the following would you say are the biggest difficulties schools face? (READ LIST SLOWLY. ACCEPT NO MORE THAN TWO RESPONSES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| The topic itself is not very interesting..... | 25 |
| There is not much in the way of good teaching materials.. | 18 |
| Not many teachers are interested in teaching it..... | 12 |
| The topic can be controversial..... | 7 |
| There is no real place in the curriculum to teach it..... | 7 |
| Not many students are interested in it..... | 63 |
| None (VOL)..... | 8 |
| Not sure..... | 2 |

12. What suggestions do you have for improving the way our schools teach students about citizenship? (PROBE:) How could the teaching of citizenship be improved? (PROBE:) What would make the study of citizenship more interesting to young people today?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Get students more involved | 22% | Need updated books, better equipment, materials | 14 |
| Bring in speakers | 16 | Field trips | 13 |
| Hands-on experience program | 16 | Make program interesting; jazz it up | 12 |
| Show them how it applies to them; make it personal, relevant to their lives | 14 | Make it a mandatory course | 12 |
| Need better teachers, stricter teachers | 14 | Curriculum should be improved; change the way courses are taught | 11 |
| | | Don't know; no response | 1 |

13. I'm going to read you several possible reasons for young people not being more involved in politics and public affairs, and for each one I mention, please tell me if you think it is a strong reason or a weak reason young people are not more involved.

| | Strong Reason | Weak Reason | In Between (VOL) | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents don't encourage young people to get involved..... | 84 | 13 | 3 | - |
| The schools do not do a very good job teaching young people how to be good citizens..... | 28 | 62 | 8 | 2 |
| There are too many other pressures on young people--like getting good grades or getting a good job--that keep them from getting involved in community service activities..... | 67 | 29 | 4 | - |
| Politicians set a bad example, which discourages young people from getting involved in public life..... | 54 | 40 | 6 | - |
| Things are so complicated and the problems facing the country are so big that young people are discouraged from becoming involved..... | 38 | 56 | 6 | - |
| No one asks young people to get involved or shows them how they can.. | 56 | 39 | 5 | - |
| Young people feel that people should take care of themselves and shouldn't expect others to do things for them.. | 22 | 72 | 5 | 1 |

14. Now I'm going to read you some suggestions that have been made about how to get young people more involved in service to the community or the country. For each suggestion I mention, please tell me if you think it is a good idea or not such a good idea.

| | Good Idea | Not A Good Idea | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Require all high school students to perform some community service activity after school before they can graduate | 74 | 26 | - |
| Give high school students extra credit toward graduation if they get involved in community service activities | 88 | 11 | 1 |
| Have a national law requiring all young people to spend one year in public service before they reach age 25--either in community service or service in the military | 42 | 55 | 3 |
| Have a national law that gives young people extra benefits--like student loans and other financial assistance--if they get involved in community service or military service | 84 | 16 | - |
| Have a national law that says young people can only get government benefits like student loans for college and other financial assistance if they get involved in community service or military service | 30 | 68 | 2 |

15a. Does your high school have a program to register eligible students to vote?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, has registration program | 79 | ASK Q.15b. |
| No, does not have program | 20 | SKIP TO |
| Not sure | 1 | Q.16a. |

15b. Is this more of an active program that aggressively tries to register eligible students, or more of a passive program that only registers students who take the initiative themselves?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active program | 51 | In between (VOL) | 4 |
| Passive program | 24 | Not sure | - |
| | | No program | 20 |
| | | Not sure if school has program | 1 |

16a. Does your school require participation in some form of community service from its students? (IF "NO" OR "NOT SURE," ASK:) Would you say your school actively encourages its students to participate in some form of community service?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Requires community service | 7 | ASK |
| Encourages community service | 38 | Q.16b,c. |
| Neither requires nor encourages | 55 | SKIP TO |
| Not sure | - | Q.17. |

16b. How strong is your school's commitment to having its students engage in some form of community service--very strong, fairly strong, just somewhat strong, or not very strong?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very strong | 20 | Just somewhat strong | 31 |
| Fairly strong | 42 | Not very strong | 7 |
| | | Not sure | - |

16c. And just as an estimate, what percentage of the seniors graduating from your high school this spring will have spent more than a few hours engaged in some form of service out in the community? (DO NOT READ CHOICES.)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10% or less | 18 | 51% to 60% | 9 |
| 11% to 20% | 13 | 61% to 70% | 3 |
| 21% to 30% | 16 | 71% to 80% | 4 |
| 31% to 40% | 10 | 81% to 90% | 2 |
| 41% to 50% | 12 | 91% to 100% | 6 |
| | | Not sure | 7 |

17. Getting to the end of the survey, I'm going to read you several types of people who might have an impact if they encouraged young people to be good citizens and get involved in community service. For each one I mention, please tell me whether you think they would have a great deal, quite a bit, just some, or very little effect. (REPEAT CHOICES FOR EACH ITEM.)

| | Great Deal | Quite A Bit | Just Some | Very Little | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents | 71 | 16 | 11 | 2 | - |
| Religious leaders | 16 | 17 | 52 | 15 | - |
| TV, movie, music, or sports stars | 42 | 22 | 25 | 10 | 1 |
| The president | 16 | 16 | 46 | 21 | 1 |
| Community leaders | 12 | 21 | 50 | 17 | - |
| Teachers | 31 | 34 | 32 | 3 | - |
| Business leaders | 11 | 21 | 48 | 20 | - |
| The students' friends and peers | 66 | 23 | 9 | 2 | - |

FACTUALS: These last questions are for statistical purposes only.

F1. What is your age?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 30 | 5 | 50 to 59 | 26 |
| 30 to 39 | 23 | 60 and over | 3 |
| 40 to 49 | 43 | Refused | - |

F2. How long have you been teaching social studies?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Less than 5 years | 7 | 16 to 20 years | 24 |
| 6 to 10 years | 13 | More than 20 years | 40 |
| 11 to 15 years | 16 | Refused | - |

F3. Which of the following types of courses do you teach? (ACCEPT UP TO FIVE RESPONSES.)

| | |
|---|---|
| American history and culture | 62 |
| World history and culture | 49 |
| Government or civics | 52 |
| Economics | 33 |
| Sociology or psychology | 27 |
| Other (VOL) DESCRIBE: _____ | 6 |
| Refused | - |

F4. And do you teach courses other than social studies courses?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes, teach other courses | 23 |
| No, do not teach other courses | 77 |
| Refused | - |

F5. Do you teach at a public, parochial, or other type of private school?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Public | 95 | Other private | 3 |
| Parochial | 2 | Refused | - |

F6. Are you regularly involved in civic activities outside school, such as political campaigns, public interest groups, charities, or local community service organizations?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes, involved | 89 | Not sure/refused | - |
| No, not involved | 11 | | |

F7. What is your race or ethnic background? (READ CHOICES.)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| White | 95 | American Indian | 1 |
| Black | 3 | Asian/Oriental | - |
| Hispanic | - | Other | 1 |
| | | Not sure/refused | - |

May we please have your name and the town in which you live for validation purposes?

RESPONDENT'S NAME:

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss _____
(circle one)

Town: _____

RECORD THE FOLLOWING--DO NOT ASK!

Telephone Number: _____/_____
(Area Code)

Length of Interview

| | |
|---|---|
| 10 minutes or less..... | - |
| 11 to 14 minutes..... | 5 |
| 15 to 19 minutes..... | 71 |
| 20 to 24 minutes..... | 16 |
| 25 to 29 minutes..... | 4 |
| 30 minutes or more..... | 4 |

Time interview began: _____ : _____ a.m. p.m.
(circle)

Time interview ended: _____ : _____ a.m. p.m.
(circle)

THIS IS A BONA FIDE INTERVIEW AND HAS BEEN OBTAINED ACCORDING TO MY AGREEMENT WITH HART RESEARCH

Interviewer's Name (PLEASE SIGN):

_____

Validated By: _____ Date: _____

# METHODOLOGY

## The Youth Sample

This study is based on a statistical sample that provides a representative cross section of American youth between the ages of 15 and 24. The sample is based in turn on population data from the 1980 census and 1985 updated population estimates published by the Bureau of the Census. To represent the population accurately, the cluster size (number of interviews taken at each sample point) was limited to four. In all, 315 sample points were selected for the sample, resulting in a total of 1,006 completed interviews with respondents age 15 to 24 (404 age 15 to 17 and 602 age 18 to 25). To qualify for the interview, each respondent had to be within the appropriate age category.

The sample was drawn in the following stages:

1. The four principal geographical regions of the continental United States were sized using the Bureau of the Census 1985 population estimates. The number of sample points in each geographical area was then randomly selected proportionate to their share of the total nationwide population.

2. The states comprising each of the four geographical areas were then ranked by size (again using 1985 data) and randomly selected proportionate to their share of the total regional population.

3. All counties within each of the states were ranked by size using 1985 data. Sample counties were then selected on a random basis proportionate to their share of the total statewide population in 1985. Following this procedure, the sample was validated against racial demographic data to ensure accurate representation of the population of each state and of the country as a whole.

4. Within the counties, cities, towns, and other census subdivisions were ranked by size, based on the 1980 Census. Cluster points were then assigned by random means to subdivisions, proportionate to their share of the total county population.

5. Within the major cities, census tracts were ranked by size, then randomly chosen to designate a particular area or areas within the city.

6. Finally, the entire sample was validated on a point-by-point basis against racial demographic data from the 1980 Census to guarantee that the sample reflected the nation as a whole.

Telephone numbers were selected from appropriate directories by random means, using a skip pattern to guarantee that interviews were distributed throughout each locality. The telephone numbers thus selected were used as base numbers for a random-digit dialing system, giving every telephone-equipped household an equal chance of falling into the sample. Quotas were established for race, gender, and college students.

Telephone interviews were conducted with randomly designated respondents in 315 locations throughout the nation between April 28 and May 24, 1989. At each household, the respondent was chosen by means of a random selection pattern geared to the number of youth of either sex living in the household. Interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes. When the interviews were completed, a subsample of respondents was contacted again to verify that the data had been recorded accurately. The questionnaires were coded, keypunched, and tabulated on standard computer equipment, using Hart Research's in-house facilities.

In reading the data, keep in mind that the results are subject to sampling error--i.e., the difference between the results obtained from the sample and those that would be obtained by surveying the entire population. The size of a possible sampling error varies to some extent with the sample size and with the percentage of respondents giving a particular answer. The following table sets forth the range of error in samples of different sizes and at different percentages of response:

## RECOMMENDED ALLOWANCE FOR SAMPLING ERROR

(At 95 in 100 confidence level)*

| | Sample Size | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1000 | 800 | 600 | 400 | 200 | 100 |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Percentages near 10 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 |
| Percentages near 20 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Percentages near 30 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 |
| Percentages near 40 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10 |
| Percentages near 50 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10 |
| Percentages near 60 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10 |
| Percentages near 70 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 |
| Percentages near 80 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Percentages near 90 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 |

*The chances are 95 in 100 that the sampling error is not larger than the figures shown.

## The Teachers Sample

This study is based on a statistical sample that provides a representative cross section of social studies teachers throughout the United States. The sample is in turn based on a list of social studies teachers purchased from a major list broker. As only school addresses and phone numbers were available for these teachers, letters and return postcards from Hart Research were mailed to 4,000 teachers nationwide outlining the purpose of the study and asking them to participate by mailing in the return postcard or by calling collect. Regional quotas were established to guarantee a representative cross section of the country.

A total of 405 telephone interviews were conducted with social studies teachers who responded between May 26 and June 14, 1989. Interviews averaged 20 minutes in length. After the interviews had been completed, a subsample of respondents was recontacted to verify that the data had been recorded accurately. The questionnaires were coded, keypunched, and tabulated on standard computer equipment, using Hart Research's in-house facilities.

In reading the data, keep in mind that the results are subject to sampling error--i.e., the difference between the results obtained from the sample and those that would be obtained by surveying the entire population. The size of a possible sampling error varies to some extent with the sample size and with the percentage of respondents giving a particular answer. The following tables set forth the range of error in samples of different sizes and at different percentages of response:

## RECOMMENDED ALLOWANCE FOR SAMPLING ERROR

(At 95 in 100 confidence level)*

| | Sample Size | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 400 | 300 | 200 | 100 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| Percentages near 10 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6 |
| Percentages near 20 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Percentages near 30 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 |
| Percentages near 40 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| Percentages near 50 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 10 |
| Percentages near 60 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| Percentages near 70 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 |
| Percentages near 80 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Percentages near 90 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6 |

* The chances are 95 in 100 that the actual sampling error is not larger than the figures shown.

FOCUS GROUP MATERIALS:

DISCUSSION OUTLINE AND OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

PETER D. HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE

SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

I. CURRICULUM/TEACHING

A. What social studies courses do you teach?

B. What do you teach in your courses?

C. What are your main goals? What do you try to accomplish in your courses?

PROBES:

1. Historical background and perspective
2. Understanding current events
3. Ability to think clearly
4. Understanding of world cultures
5. Understanding of social institutions
6. Reading, writing, and speaking skills
7. College preparation

D. What's the most satisfying thing for you about teaching social studies in high school?

E. What's the most frustrating part of teaching social studies? What makes it difficult to teach social studies these days?

II. STUDENTS

A. Tell me about high school students today. Give me a word or phrase to describe them.

B. Have they changed in the past decade--during the 1980s? What's the biggest change? Have their values changed? How? Self- versus other-oriented?

C. How much social concern do they have?

D. Are students today more likely to get involved in the community, in projects helping other people? Roughly, what percentage get involved at some point in a community project?

E. How would you describe the ones that get involved? How are they different? How are they regarded by other students?

F. What makes them different? Why are they involved, while others are not?

G. How much interest do your students have in what's going on in the country? What do they find most interesting? What gets their attention, generates interest? What turns them off to politics and public affairs? Are they any different in this regard than students ten years ago were?

H. Just as a rough guess, what percentage of students have been active in politics or political campaigns, or some kind of political cause or activity, by the time they graduate?

I. What kind of students get involved in politics? How do they differ from the other students? How do other students regard them?

III. CITIZENSHIP

A. What makes a good citizen?

1. What qualities are necessary?
2. What does a person have to do to be a good citizen?

PROBES:

a. Obey the laws
b. Disobey laws one believes are morally wrong
c. Stay informed of major current events
d. Vote
e. Engage in some form of political participation beyond voting
f. Participate in some kind of civic activity

B. Where do young people learn about American political institutions? About democracy? About the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?

1. Parents
2. Schools? What level? Curriculum/extra-curricular activities?

C. Whose responsibility is it to teach young people about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?

1. Parents?
2. Schools? What level?
3. Teachers like you?

D. How much interest/support is there for teaching citizenship?

1. From the community?
2. From the school board and administration?
3. From parents?
4. From your own peers?

E. Just as a rough guess, what percentage of students who graduate from your school have a basic understanding of of American government and the political process?

F. What could be done to increase this percentage?

G. What suggestions do you have for improving the way high schools in this country teach students about citizenship? How could it be improved? Made more interesting?

H. Suppose you had to design a way to get more of the students at your high school involved--either in politics or in community activities. What would be the major components of your plan?

I. What kinds of people might have an impact if they actively encouraged young people to get involved in community service?

PROBES:

1. Parents
2. Religious leaders
3. TV, movie, music, or sports stars
4. The president
5. Community leaders
6. Teachers like you
7. Business leaders
8. The students' friends and peers

J. Let me read you a few suggestions some people have put forth to get young people more involved in service to the community and to the country. Good idea/bad idea? Why?

1. Require all high school students to perform some community service activity after school before they can graduate.

2. Give high school students extra credit toward graduation if they get involved in community service activities.

3. Have a national law requiring all young people to spend one year in public service before they reach age 25--either in community service or service in the military.

4. Have a national law that gives young people extra benefits--such as student loans and other financial assistance--if they get involved in community service or military service.

5. Have a national law that says young people can only get government benefits like student loans for college and other financial assistance if they get involved in community service or military service.

YOUTH VALUES

OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

KANSAS CITY TEACHERS

| NAME | SCHOOL TYPE | YEARS IN DIS-TRICT | YEARS TEACH-ING | SUBJECTS TAUGHT | FAVORITE SUBJECT | IDEOLOGY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aubrey | Senior High | 8 | 8 | American Government & Economics<br>U.S. History<br>Reading | Social Studies/ Government | Somewhat Liberal |
| Duane | Senior High | 3 | 12 | Psychology<br>Law<br>U.S. History | Psychology | Somewhat Conservative |
| Edward | Senior High | 3 | 3 | U.S. History<br>World History<br>Geography/ Economics | World History | Moderate |
| Gloria | Junior High | 3 | 19 | Language Arts | Social Studies | Moderate |
| Jan | Senior High | 19 | 19 | World History | World History | Moderate |
| Janice | Junior High | 1 | 4 | World History<br>U.S. History<br>Civics<br>Economics<br>Geography | World History | Very Liberal |
| John | Junior High | 20 | 20 | Social Studies | Social Studies | Somewhat Liberal |
| Michael | Senior High | 3 | 22 | World History<br>World Geography | Far Eastern Studies | Moderate |
| Phillip | Senior High | 23 | 24 | Psychology<br>World History<br>Black History | Psychology | Somewhat Liberal |
| Sharon | Junior High | 2 | 4 | Language Arts<br>Social Studies | English | -- |
| Shirley | Other | 12 | 14 | U.S. History<br>World History | World History | Very Liberal |
| William F. | Senior High | 29 | 31 | U.S. History<br>World History<br>Civics/ Government | U.S. History | Moderate |
| William M. | Senior High | 24 | 24 | Government<br>World History<br>Psychology | Psychology | Somewhat Liberal |
| Yvonne | Junior High | 1 | 11 | Reading<br>Social Studies<br>Language Arts | No Preference | Somewhat Conservative |

YOUTH VALUES

OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

PROVIDENCE TEACHERS

| NAME | SCHOOL TYPE | YEARS IN DIS-TRICT | YEARS TEACH-ING | SUBJECTS TAUGHT | FAVORITE SUBJECT | IDEOLOGY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carol | Senior High | 6 | 16 | World History<br>European History<br>U.S. History<br>Art History | Intellectual History | Somewhat Liberal |
| Carolyn | Junior High | 6 | 10 | Civics<br>U.S. History | U.S.History | Somewhat Liberal |
| Diane | Senior High | 4 | 7 | U.S. History<br>Western Civilization<br>Political Science | U.S.History | Somewhat Liberal |
| Edmund | Senior High | 23 | 23 | Social Studies<br>Western Civilization<br>Psychology | Western Civilization | Somewhat Conservative |
| Gary | Senior High | 21 | 23 | U.S. History<br>Political Science<br>Comparative Studies | Political Science | Moderate |
| Gerald | Senior High | 21 | 21 | U.S. History<br>Contemporary Affairs | U.S. History | Moderate |
| James | Junior High | 10 | 10 | Culture Areas<br>Geography<br>Consumer Economics<br>Government<br>Law | Government/ Economics | Moderate |
| Lyn | Junior High | 17 | 19 | World Geography | Geography/ Anthropology | Somewhat Liberal |
| Marie | Junior High | 18 | 18 | Social Studies<br>Science | Science | Somewhat Conservative |
| Mary Sylvia | Senior High | 10 | 40 | Western Civilization<br>American History<br>Debate | Debate | Moderate |
| Maureen | Junior High | 4 | 20 | World Geography | Social Studies/ English | Somewhat Liberal |
| Michael | Junior High | 2 | 2 | Social Studies | Western Civilization | Somewhat Liberal |
| Myron | Junior High | 24 | 24 | Social Studies<br>Culture Areas<br>Economics<br>Law | Law/Asian Studies | Somewhat Conservative |

(cont'd)

YOUTH VALUES

OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

PROVIDENCE TEACHERS

| NAME | SCHOOL TYPE | YEARS IN DIS-TRICT | YEARS TEACH-ING | SUBJECTS TAUGHT | FAVORITE SUBJECT | IDEOLOGY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nisa | Junior High | 2 | 2 | Social Studies | Sociology/Law | Somewhat Liberal |
| Thomas | Senior High | 24 | 25 | Civics Psychology Consumer Education | Psychology | Somewhat Liberal |

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS:

QUESTIONNAIRE AND OVERVIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Peter Hart Research Associates, Inc.
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

Study #2900
Youth Values
May 1989

Hello, my name is _____ and I am glad you could arrange to meet with me today. I am doing this interview with you for Peter Hart Research, which is a well-known public opinion research firm located in Washington, D.C. As part of a large project they are doing on the attitudes and opinions of young people today, they are conducting these one-on-one interviews all over the country.

As you can see, I have a tape recorder running. This is simply so that I can concentrate on what you are saying and I don't have to ask you to wait while I write it all down. Though I will be writing down some of your answers, this questionnaire is simply used to be sure I stick to the script and cover all the topics they want me to ask you about.

Please be assured that your confidentiality will be absolutely guaranteed and whatever you have to say will not be traced back to you personally. Also, you will not be quoted directly without your permission.

Let's start by telling me a little about yourself.

1. How old are you? _____

   What grade or year of school are you in? _____

   What is the name of the school? _____

   Do you have any brothers or sisters? What kind of work do your father and mother do?

   What do you like to do in your spare time, when you're not working or doing school work?

2. Do you have any heroes or people you especially admire? Who are some of the people you really look up to or would want to be like?

   _____

   _____

   Why do you admire these people? What's special about them?

3. Compared to when your parents were your age, do you think it's easier or harder to be a young person today?

   Easier ___ Harder ___ Depends ___

   Why do you feel this way? What are some of the things that make it easier? How do you have it better than your parents did when they were your age?

   What are some of the special pressures young people face today? What are some of the things that make it harder to be a young person now?

4. When you think about your future, maybe ten or fifteen years from now, what are some of the things you hope for?

_____

_____

If things really work out as you'd like them to, how do you picture your life ten or fifteen years from now?

_____

_____

5. And when you think about your future, what are some of the things that worry you the most or concern you most about the future?

_____

_____

6. Now I'd like to change the subject and ask you about the things that make America special. If someone from another country asked you to explain what makes America special, what would you tell them?

_____

_____

What are the things about America that you are most proud of?

_____

_____

7. Suppose a foreign country invaded the United States and tried to take away some of the rights and freedoms we have in America. Can you think of any special right or freedom that you would fight the hardest to keep?

_____
(special right or freedom would fight the hardest for)

8. What do you think the most important goals for America should be in the next ten years? What changes or improvements do you think the country should be trying to accomplish? If I could make you president of the country, what are some of the things you would try to do?

9. If someone asked you to explain what it means to be a good citizen, what would you tell him?

_____

_____

How would you describe a good citizen?

_____

_____

What are some of the things a good citizen does?

_____

_____

10. Do you consider yourself to be a good citizen? Why?

Can you give me an example of an adult you know who you consider to be a really good citizen? Why do you think of that person?

One of the famous quotes from President Kennedy says: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." What does this mean to you? How do you feel about this quote?

11. During the past year, have you volunteered for any community or neighborhood service activity?

(IF "YES:") What did you do? Could you tell me how you got involved in that service project? Was there a particular person or thing that happened to help you get involved?

How did you feel about your involvement in this community service activity? What was your reaction to it?

(IF "NO, NOT INVOLVED IN A SERVICE ACTIVITY:") Is there any particular reason you have not been involved in this kind of activity? Did anyone ever ask you? Would you want to get involved? Could you think of any particular type of project you would like to get involved with?

12. Just as your best guess, do you think young people today are more involved or less involved in community service activities than young people were 20 or 30 years ago? Why do you think this is?

13. If I put you in charge of a campaign to get young people more involved in community service activities, what would you do?

_____

_____

What are the most important things you would tell young people about why they should get involved?

_____

_____

What do you think is the best way to convince them to get involved?

_____

_____

Who would you get to be the spokesperson for this campaign?

_____

If we were going to make commercials to encourage young people to get involved in community service activities, who would we get to appear in these commercials?

_____

14. Do the schools do a good job of encouraging young people to get involved in helping their communities?

Yes ____ No ____

How about parents? Yes ____ No ____

How about politicians and government leaders? Yes ____ No ____

15. Do you think everybody has a responsibility as a good citizen to get involved in some kind of community activity, or do you think you can be a good citizen without volunteering for some kind of service activity?

Many countries--like Denmark, Switzerland, and Israel--require all their citizens to perform some kind of national service, either in the military or some other way. Do you feel this kind of system would work in the United States? Do you think it would be a good idea here? Why do you feel that way?

How would you feel about having a national law requiring all young people to spend one year in public service before they reach age 25, either in some kind of community service or service in the military?

16. On another subject, how much do you feel you know about the way government works--a great deal, quite a bit, just some, or very little?

Great deal ___ Quite a bit ___ Just some ___ Very little ___

Do you know the name of the governor of your state?

Yes _____ No ___
(write in)

Do you know how many years are in a term for U.S. president?

Yes, _____ years No ___
(write in)

How much interest do you have in what goes on in government and politics? Why do you feel that way?

17. (IF 18 OR OVER) Are you registered to vote? Yes ___ No ___

Did you vote in last year's elections? Yes ___ No ___

Why (or why not?)

(IF UNDER 18) Compared to other things you get to do when you are 18, how much do you look forward to getting the opportunity to vote? How likely are you to register and vote in the first election after you turn 18? Why do you feel this way?

18. Statistics show that young people today don't turn out to vote as much as young people did 10 or 20 years ago. Why do you think this is?

What would you do to get young people to vote more? What message do young people need to get about the system? What message does the system need to get about young people?

19. If the president said we were in a national emergency and asked people to volunteer for military service, would you? Why or why not?

20. Have you had any courses in school that taught you about how government works and about being a good citizen? What were these courses like? What did you learn from them? Compared to other courses, were these courses interesting or boring? Why?

How much do you feel you learned about government and citizenship in your courses in school--a lot, a fair amount, just some, or not that much?

A lot _____ Fair amount _____ Just some _____ Not that much _____

Do you have any ideas or suggestions about how the schools could do a better job of teaching students about government and the role of a citizen?

That's the end of the interview. If you could just take a minute to fill out this short questionnaire with some background information, we'll be all done. Thank you very much for helping us. You had a lot of interesting things to say.

PETER D. HART RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

RESPONDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone #: _____

Age: _____ Are you currently in school: Yes ____ No ____

1. What grade or year of school are you in/what is the last grade or year of school that you completed? (CHECK BELOW)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8th grade or below..... | _____ | -1 |
| 9th grade..... | _____ | -2 |
| 10th grade..... | _____ | -3 |
| 11th grade..... | _____ | -4 |
| 12th grade..... | _____ | -5 |
| Technical/vocational school. | _____ | -6 |
| 1st or 2nd year of college.. | _____ | -7 |
| 3rd or 4th year of college.. | _____ | -8 |
| Graduate school..... | _____ | -9 |
| Not currently a student..... | _____ | -0 |

2. Are you currently employed in a paying job?

Yes, full time.. _____ -1 No, not employed _____ -3
Yes, part time.. _____ -2

3. What kind of work does/did your father do?

_____

4. What kind of work does/did your mother do?

_____

5. What is your race or ethnic background?

White..... _____ -1 Hispanic..... _____ -3
Black..... _____ -2 Other..... _____ -4

The overall results of this research will be publicly released later this year as part of a major study of attitudes among young Americans. Would you mind if someone contacted you as part of the media coverage of this project?

YES, it's okay to contact me..... _____ -1
NO, I do not want to be contacted _____ -2

YOUTH VALUES

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

| NAME | CITY, STATE | AGE | ETHNIC BACK-GROUND | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| David | Albuquerque, NM | 20 | Hispanic | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Esther | Albuquerque, NM | 22 | Hispanic | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Mari | Albuquerque, NM | 18 | Hispanic | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Chuck | Armonk, NY | 17 | Other | 12th Grade | None |
| David | Armonk, NY | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Part-time |
| Victoria | Armonk, NY | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Part-time |
| Lanier | Atlanta, GA | 21 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |
| Tanya | Atlanta, GA | 23 | White | Graduate School | Full-time |
| Theresa | Atlanta, GA | 23 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Amy | Boston, MA | 19 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Part-time |
| James | Boston, MA | 20 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Robert | Boston, MA | 22 | White | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Janice | Bridgeport, WV | 17 | White | 12th Grade | Part-time |
| Lisa | Bridgeport, WV | 18 | White | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Richie | Bridgeport, WV | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Full-time |
| Brian | Canton, OH | 17 | White | 12th Grade | Part-time |
| Christine | Canton, OH | 16 | White | 10th Grade | None |
| Jeannie | Canton, OH | 16 | White | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Eric | Chicago, IL | 17 | Black | 12th Grade | Part-time |
| La Toya | Chicago, IL | 15 | Black | 10th Grade | None |
| Todd | Chicago, IL | 17 | Black | 11th Grade | None |
| David | Greensboro, NC | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Donna | Greensboro, NC | 22 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |

YOUTH VALUES

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

| NAME | CITY, STATE | AGE | ETHNIC BACK-GROUND | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Howard | Greensboro, NC | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Elmer | Houston, TX | 19 | Hispanic | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Sandra | Houston, TX | 20 | Black | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Stephanie | Houston, TX | 20 | Black | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |
| Brian | Independence, MO | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Jill | Independence, MO | 18 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Marshall | Independence, MO | 18 | White | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Frank | Kansas City, MO | 23 | White | Graduate School | Part-time |
| Colleen | Louisville, KY | 15 | White | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Ryan | Louisville, KY | 17 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Tracy | Louisville, KY | 17 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Amy | Madison, WI | 18 | White | Technical/ Vocational School | Full-time |
| James | Madison, WI | 20 | White | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Jennifer | Madison, WI | 18 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Jonathan | Metuchen, NJ | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Part-time |
| Mary | Miami, FL | 17 | Hispanic | 11th Grade | None |
| Joaquin | Miami, FL | 24 | Hispanic | Graduate School | Part-time |
| Cynthia | Middletown, DE | 16 | White | 9th Grade | Part-time |
| Drew | Middletown, DE | 16 | White | 10th Grade | None |
| Gary | Middletown, DE | 15 | White | 9th Grade | Full-time |
| Kevin | Minneapolis, MN | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Ursula | Minneapolis, MN | 18 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Part-time |

YOUTH VALUES

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

| NAME | CITY, STATE | AGE | ETHNIC BACK-GROUND | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yvette | Minneapolis, MN | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Amy | Montgomery, AL | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Part-time |
| Chris | Montgomery, AL | 15 | White | 9th Grade | None |
| Michael | Montgomery, AL | 15 | White | 9th Grade | None |
| Melissa | New Haven, CT | 22 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | None |
| Michael | New Haven, CT | 24 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Shawn | New Haven, CT | 22 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | None |
| Curtis | New York, NY | 24 | Black | Graduate School | Full-time |
| Nicole | New York, NY | 18 | Black | 12th Grade | None |
| Troy | New York, NY | 22 | Black | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Ed | Petaluma, CA | 15 | White | 8th Grade | None |
| Kymberly | Petaluma, CA | 17 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Robyn | Petaluma, CA | 16 | White | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Lori | Philadelphia, PA | 21 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Robert | Philadelphia, PA | 18 | White | 12th Grade | Full-time |
| Robin | Philadelphia, PA | 19 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Lisa | Portland, ME | 19 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |
| Peter | Portland, ME | 16 | White | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Cari | Portland, OR | 20 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Janet | Portland, OR | 23 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |
| Justin | Portland, OR | 19 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Part-time |
| Andrew | Providence, RI | 20 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Full-time |

YOUTH VALUES

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

| NAME | CITY, STATE | AGE | ETHNIC BACK-GROUND | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carolyn | Providence, RI | 21 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | None |
| Maureen | Providence, RI | 19 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Part-time |
| Cathy | San Francisco, CA | 17 | Hispanic | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Danny | San Francisco, CA | 17 | Hispanic | 1st/2nd Year College | None |
| Donald | San Francisco, CA | 21 | Black | 11th Grade | Full-time |
| Judith | San Francisco, CA | 15 | Hispanic | 10th Grade | None |
| Malcolm | San Francisco, CA | 23 | Black | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |
| Nina | San Francisco, CA | 24 | Black | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Becky | Seattle, WA | 15 | White | 9th Grade | None |
| Jason | Seattle, WA | 17 | White | 11th Grade | Part-time |
| Paul | Seattle, WA | 15 | White | 9th Grade | None |
| Melanie | Seekonk, MA | 17 | Other | 11th Grade | None |
| Royce | Seekonk, MA | 21 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | None |
| Craig | Spartanburg, SC | 22 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| James | Spartanburg, SC | 23 | White | 12th Grade | Part-time |
| Susanne | Spartanburg, SC | 18 | White | 1st/2nd Year College | Part-time |
| Allison | Spring Valley, NY | 17 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Brendan | Spring Valley, NY | 16 | White | 10th Grade | Part-time |
| Shari | Spring Valley, NY | 17 | White | 12th Grade | None |
| Mari | Stanford, CA | 21 | Hispanic | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Mike | Stanford, CA | 22 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Part-time |
| Mitchell | Stanford, CA | 24 | White | Graduate School | None |
| Amy | Tampa, FL | 16 | White | 10th Grade | None |

YOUTH VALUES

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

| NAME | CITY, STATE | AGE | ETHNIC BACK-GROUND | EDUCATION | EMPLOYMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Chris | Tampa, FL | 15 | White | 9th Grade | Part-time |
| Lisa | Tampa, FL | 15 | White | 10th Grade | None |
| Edward | Toledo, OH | 16 | White | Technical/ Vocational School | Part-time |
| Robert | Toledo, OH | 17 | White | 11th Grade | None |
| Suzette | Toledo, OH | 17 | White | 12th Grade | Part-time |
| Jamie | Verbena, AL | 15 | Black | 8th Grade | None |
| Paula | Verbena, AL | 16 | Black | 9th Grade | None |
| Ryan | Verbena, AL | 15 | Black | 10th Grade | Full-time |
| Catherine | Washington, DC | 24 | White | 3rd/4th Year College | Full-time |
| Laini | Washington, DC | 15 | Black | 10th Grade | Full-time |

People For The
American Way
The non-partisan constitutional liberties organization.

END

U.S. Dept. of Education

Office of Education
Research and
Improvement (OERI)

ERIC

Date Filmed

March 21,1991